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CHARLES THE BOLD, DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

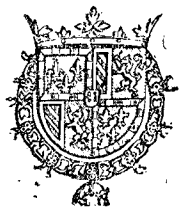
HISTORY

OF

CHARLES THE BOLD,

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

By JOHN FOSTER KIRK.



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WITH PORTRAITS.

VOL. I.

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1863.

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TO

JAMES LAWRENCE, ESQUIRE,

OF BOSTON.

My dear Mr. Lawrence,

I wish to be permitted to connect your name with this book, as well on account of the associations which first led you to feel an interest in its composition as because you, more than any other of my friends, have known the obstacles in its way, and have done all that friend—or man—could do to remove them.

Believe me, dear Mr. Lawrence,

Ever faithfully and affectionately yours,

J. F. KIRK.

PREFACE.

For the greater number of the works consulted in the preparation of this History, the author was indebted to the kindness of the late William H. Prescott, who employed all the facilities at his command for procuring the requisite materials. Circumstances might be mentioned to explain the generous interest thus displayed in a doubtful enterprise by one who knew, because he had himself surmounted them, the difficulties of historical investigation. But, in truth, nothing was more characteristic of that distinguished and lamented man, than his readiness to afford encouragement, counsel, or assistance to the humblest of his fellow-labourers in an ample and ever-widening field.

The career of Charles the Bold has been commonly regarded as merely a romantic episode in European history. That the subject is in truth one of a very different nature has, however, been apparent to the Continental scholars who within the last twenty years have made a special study of its different portions, and whose researches have done much for the elucidation of its obscurer features. In the volumes now submitted to the public, to be completed by a third which is in course of preparation, an attempt has been made to combine in a symmetrical narrative

whatever the chronicles, the documentary evidence, and the fruits of critical inquiry and discussion could furnish for the just appreciation of an eventful period. Recent explorations in Belgium, in Switzerland, in Austria, and in other states, have brought to light a quantity of material, which has been rightly considered as claiming for the chief actors and notable transactions of that period an ampler presentment, a stricter analysis, and in some cases a more impartial judgment, than they had hitherto obtained. Those, therefore, in whom the masterly delineations of Philippe de Commines, the skilfully executed mosaics of M. de Barante, or the fascinating pictures of Scott, may have suggested a wish for fuller or more exact information, will not, it is hoped, be disposed to reject the contribution here offered. While it might be more satisfactory to gather the results from the original sources themselves, the most inquisitive can scarcely be expected to roam over so wide a field, in search of memoirs and documents scattered among the publications of Royal Commissions and learned Societies, written in various and often in obscure dialects, and requiring for their comprehension a previous familiarity with details.

That the material has been duly sifted, to the extent of the author's ability, need hardly be said, for the canons of historical composition are now too well settled and too generally understood to allow of any wanton negligence on the part of the writer, or any willing credulity on that of the reader. The one thing essential to the value of such a composition

is a strict conformity with facts, as far as these can be ascertained. No one expects from it the artistic harmony, the unity and completeness, the agreement of form and substance, which give their highest charm to products of the pure imagination. And even that sense of reality which forms the compensatory balance is necessarily imperfect and constantly disturbed. Apart from the common liability to errors and oversights, the medium through which the story passes will give its own colouring to the driest as well as the most brilliant work. History at the best is but an echo, a faint reverberation of the tumult of the world amongst the thoughts and experiences of a single mind.

Mr. Charles Folsom, of Cambridge, Massachusetts, whose critical acumen, happily for more than one generation of literary men, has found less congenial employment in the public castigation than in the private correction of faults and inaccuracies, gave kind and valuable aid in the revision of the press; an advantage, however, confined unfortunately to the first volume, owing to a greater rapidity in the printing of the second.

To several other gentlemen whose merits and accomplishments are widely known,—to Professor Parsons of Harvard College, the Reverend William R. Alger, Mr. James A. Dupee, and in a very particular degree to Mr. James T. Fields,—the writer is under obligations for various friendly offices which have facilitated the prosecution of his task. It can detract nothing from the force of this acknowledgment to add, that the

warmth with which such services were rendered is a national as well as an individual trait. All who are well acquainted with the social condition of the United States will admit that it is the country where men are best able to help themselves, and most ready to help others.

London, November, 1863.

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HISTORY

OF

CHARLES THE BOLD.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

FRANCE AT THE CLOSE OF THE FOURTEENTH, AND IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE FIFTEENTH, CENTURY.

When the chivalrous but unfortunate King John of France, in fulfilment of his knightly pledge, was about to return to the English prison where he was destined to end his life, he deposited with the Chancellor of Burgundy an instrument whereby he granted that duchy as a fief to his youngest and favourite son, Philip surnamed the Bold, who, while a mere boy, had fought gallantly by his side at Poitiers, and who had shared the earlier years of his captivity.

By the monarch's desire, however, this donation was kept secret until after his death, when it was published and confirmed by his successor, Charles the Fifth. It conferred on Philip all the rights and prerogatives of feudal sovereignty, subject to the usual reservation of homage and reversion to the crown. 1364.

It was in the fifth century that the Burgundians—a

tribe of somewhat uncertain origin, but commonly supposed to have been a branch of the great Teutonic race[1] —had forced their way across the Rhine and the Alps, and founded one of those semi-barbarous kingdoms which arose on the ruins of the Roman Empire. The existence of this kingdom was of short duration; but others succeeded, bearing the same name, though comprising a territory of ill-defined extent with constantly fluctuating bounds.[2] At length, through a gradual and obscure process of decay, the monarchy was broken up, and its dissevered portions passed into various hands, and so ceased to have a common history.

One province, the first to attain a separate existence, but the last to relinquish the common name, was ruled over, during several successive ages, by a line of princes connected originally by descent from the same stock, and subsequently by intermarriage, with the royal

[1] M. de Belloguet, who has discussed this subject with an erudition surpassing that of his predecessors, arrives at three conclusions, the first of which he regards as certain, the latter two as highly probable: 1. That the Burgundians were originally Vandals. 2. That they received an infusion of new blood, a race of chiefs, and the name by which alone they are known in history, from a Scandinavian emigration. 3. That, before their entry into Gaul, they had conquered and enslaved some of the Roman colonists and garrisons established in Germany, and, by the subsequent enfranchisement and affiliation of these captives, had introduced another and altogether foreign element into their national character and language. See the "Questions Bourguignonnes," prefixed to the second edition of Courtépée, Description générale et particulière du Duché de Bourgogne (4 vols. 8vo., Dijon, 1847), tom. i. p. 14 et seq.

[2] According to Plancher there were in all five different kingdoms of Burgundy. Some of them, however, were called also by other names—Arles, Provence, &c. In fact, the Burgundian sovereignty was sometimes a separate and independent, sometimes a tributary, possession. At the period of its greatest expansion it comprised the whole country between the Vosges and the Mediterranean, the Piedmontese Alps and the mountains of Vivarais. Histoire de Bourgogne (4 vols. folio, Dijon, 1739-1783), tom. i. lib. 5. See also Gingins-la-Sarra, Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire des Royaumes de Provence et de Bourgogne Jurane (Lausanne, 1851-1853).

house of France. Burgundy seems, however, never to have been properly a French fief, until at the death of Philip de Rouvres, the last duke of what was afterwards to be known as the "first race," it passed, not by reversion but by inheritance, to King John, by whom it was disposed of, a few years later, in the manner already stated.

This transfer, though dictated by motives of family affection, was in strict accordance with the prevailing ideas and policy of the age. Feudal obligations were still regarded as the natural ligaments of the monarchy, and were supposed to be strengthened by an additional tie when the frontier provinces were bestowed as fiefs upon the near relatives of the sovereign.

Yet France had already experienced the fatal effects of that division of her territory whereby the vital force that should have been equally diffused throughout the body politic, furnishing energy and resources to the directing head, had been confined to certain of the subordinate members. It is to this cause, and not to any natural hostility of races or rivalry of powers, that the long and desolating wars waged on the French soil, between the monarchs of England and France, are to be attributed. The Plantagenets were vassals of the French crown; they had a permanent foothold on the French territory; and this first excited their ambition to establish their supremacy in France, and enabled them to seize the opportunity for invasion whenever one kingdom was united and strong, the other divided and powerless.

But the Norman sovereigns of England were not related, at least by any close affinity, to the Capetian race. They had acquired their chief possessions in

France as they had acquired the English crown, not by grant or inheritance, but by the power of their arms. They were foreigners and open enemies; their only adherents in France were secret traitors or avowed rebels; and they could not, therefore, mask their designs against it under the pretext of serving the nation and reforming the state.

France nourished within her bosom foes more dangerous than Edward the Third or Henry the Fifth. The monarchy was in peril of being overthrown and crushed by what had been regarded as its strongest bulwarks. The dukes of Burgundy were a branch of the house of Valois. As princes of the blood they claimed a part in the management of the affairs of the kingdom, and more especially the right to interfere, on behalf of the nation, whenever the embarrassments or incompetence of the government occasioned demands for its reform. At the same time they exercised in their own dominions, comprising some of the fairest portions of the monarchy, a sway that was virtually independent. Beyond the limits of the monarchy they acquired territory and dominion, becoming sovereigns of foreign states and vassals of foreign sovereigns. They used their power and availed themselves of their position to weaken the authority of the crown and to convulse the realm. They were the authors or abettors of all the civil dissensions of the time. Their court was the refuge of the disaffected; their wealth furnished the resources of rebellion; and under their standard feudalism maintained its last struggle with royalty—with the principles that were to form the basis of civil government and national unity during the three succeeding centuries.

The history of that struggle forms the main subject of the present work. The most conspicuous feature in the career of Charles the Bold is his rivalry with Louis the Eleventh—the perpetual war which they waged against each other, by force and by intrigue, on the battle-field and in foreign courts—a war never more real or more deadly than when carried on under the show of peace. In whatever direction the narrative may wander, it is still connected with this central point. There is no digression, no episode, that does not gravitate towards it. In the efforts of Louis to raise the throne to a loftier position, to establish a firm government, to concentrate in his own person all the powers of the state, he was confronted at every step by the mailed figure of his haughty vassal. Wherever Charles turned his ambitious glance, whatever spot was the scene of his daring projects, there his cunning enemy was at work, sowing distrust among his allies, gaining over his adherents by promises and gold, rending his plans, mining the ground beneath his feet, and by secret machinations preparing his ruin. It was such a contest as writers of romance are fond of depicting, between combatants dissimilarly armed and contrasted in their methods of attack, yet not unequally matched; the one confident in his superior strength and stouter weapon, urgent and daring in his attempts; the other agile and full of address, warily parrying the heaviest strokes, recovering himself when hardest pushed, and returning with his slender rapier swift and stealthy thrusts that draw away the life-blood of his foe.

Such being our subject, it is necessary that we should enter upon it by a brief account of the leading events of French history—which is also the history of the dukes

of Burgundy—at the close of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth century. A meagre and most imperfect sketch must serve to recall to the reader's mind the character of that momentous epoch, so often illustrated by laborious and minute research and by the highest efforts of historic art.[3]

The death of Charles the Fifth—justly called "the Wise"—under whose skilful rule the country
1380. had in some degree recovered from the disasters of the preceding reign, must in any event have been a great calamity to France. Viewed in connection with the actual consequences, it seemed like a blow from the hand of a wrathful Providence. The minority of Charles

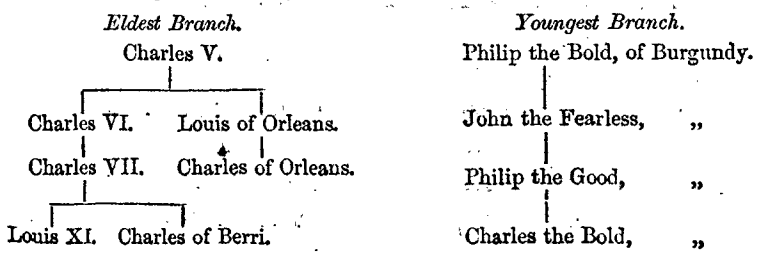
[3] It cannot be denied that the history—especially the mediæval history—of France has been far more carefully explored and copiously illustrated than that of England. Leaving out of view the acknowledged superiority of the French chroniclers, and the greater amount of documentary matter—at least of such as possesses any general interest—published in the former country, no English writer has embodied the national annals in a consecutive narrative with the fulness, sagacity, and impartiality of Sismondi—or examined the causes of social and political revolutions with the learning and philosophy of Guizot—or penetrated the meaning and evoked the spirit of the Past with the vivid imagination of Michelet. The last-mentioned writer has seldom received from foreign critics the tribute justly due to his splendid but not less solid genius. He has been called a poet, a dramatist, anything but what he, whose pages more than those of any other writer reflect the life and reality of bygone ages, is pre-eminently entitled to be called—a historian. Mr. Hallam, with greater candour and better appreciation, styles him "a poet in all save his fidelity to truth." No one, indeed, who has had occasion to study in the original sources the periods which he has treated, will be loth to admit, not merely the light which he has shed upon the obscurest points, and the interest which he has given to the driest details, but his extreme accuracy, and the astonishing faculty of condensation which has enabled him to bring together within so small a compass all that was essential in the way either of fact or illustration. Such, at least, are the characteristics of his earlier volumes, and especially of the fourth, fifth, and sixth—as M. Henri Martin bears evidence, who, in the corresponding portion of his popular and meritorious work, follows closely on the track of Michelet, conforming almost always to his ideas, and not unfrequently to his language.

the Sixth, and his subsequent insanity, the mischievous effects of which were only aggravated by short but frequent intervals of lucidity, left the nation for nearly half a century without a head. Among the princes of the blood, the Duke of Burgundy alone displayed either energy or talent. He stepped before his two elder brothers, the dukes of Anjou and Berri, and assumed the largest share in the government of the kingdom and the guardianship of the royal person. Had his interests been identical with those of the people over whom he aspired to rule, a man of so much resoluteness and ability might have extirpated the roots of discord before they had struck deep. But he was only a great feudal chief, more ambitious and more able than his rivals; and his influence in the government was mainly directed to the furtherance of projects for the aggrandizement of his family. By his own marriage and the marriages of his children, he had secured to himself or his descendants the succession to the richest and most populous provinces of the Netherlands. He was in fact laying the foundations of a state destined one day to be the rival of France; and, while he employed for this purpose the resources of his native country, he lost no opportunity of strengthening himself by alliances with other powers. The magnificence of his court and the haughty splendour with which he appeared before the public eye combined with his character and position to make him the most conspicuous personage of the time. But so vast were his schemes and the expenditure they entailed, that in the midst of wealth he was overwhelmed with debt; and at his death, his widow, Margaret of Flanders, 1404.
whose nature was as hard and unflinching as his own, in order to rescue her personal effects from the

hands of his creditors, had recourse to a form of the feudal law practised only by persons of an inferior grade, and publicly laid upon the coffin of her deceased lord her girdle, with her keys and purse attached, in token that she divorced herself from him, renouncing her rights of dower and her responsibility for his debts.[4]

In four generations of the house of Valois, children and descendants of King John, there is a remarkable contrast between the mental characteristics of the eldest and those of the youngest branch.[5] The princes of the former line, however unlike in most respects, resembled each other in a certain refinement of organization, sometimes exhibited in keenness or subtlety of intellect, sometimes in delicacy of feeling or of taste or a peculiar sensitiveness of the conscience, sometimes in timidity of purpose, indolence of temperament, or aversion to the conflict and tumult by which they were surrounded, and in which their own interests were deeply concerned. At the height of fortune there was no arrogance in their demeanour, no idle pomp or ostentatious luxury in their mode of life; amid the gloomiest reverses they were never driven to a wild and reckless despair. Sometimes

[4] Monstrelet (ed. Buchon), tom. i. p. 142.—Plancher rejects this account, on the ground that the notarial act, which he prints, while it establishes the fact of Margaret's renunciation of her claims and liabilities, makes no allusion to the ceremony noticed in the text. Hist. de Bourgogne, tom. iii. p. 574, and Preuves, p. ccxix.



pliable, always impressionable, their course was that of a stream which, unswollen by torrents, follows the windings of its natural channel. Their success was generally due to the wisdom of their conceptions, their just appreciation of means and circumstances, and their discrimination in the choice of their agents; when they failed, it was from lack of energy, weakness of will, or inability to act with promptitude and courage. Charles the Fifth and Louis the Eleventh were sagacious and adroit politicians; but they missed, or were thought to have missed, more than one opportunity of achieving a signal and complete success from their unwillingness to venture a sufficient stake on the hazards of war. Charles the Seventh was, perhaps, not much their inferior in natural capacity; but, personally indolent and addicted to pleasure, he chiefly evinced his fitness for affairs by the moderation of his views, the calmness of his temper, and his sagacity in the selection of his ministers. Both Louis and Charles of Orleans were highly accomplished men, patrons and cultivators of literature, well suited to adorn a private station, but destitute of the qualities required for a great position and the career of public life. In Charles the Sixth and his grandson, the Duke of Berri, the defects of this character are revealed in the strongest light: one was driven mad by the mad conflict of the times; the other, feeble and incompetent, was tossed about like a feather in the whirlwind of faction and civil war.

If the attempt be thought fanciful to trace a family likeness in persons so variously constituted and endowed, it will at least be admitted that in none of them are the features stamped with those rude and turbulent passions, that boldness of temper and that ferocity of sentiment,

which glare upon us from so many faces in the long vista of mediæval history. Their physiognomy has, so to speak, an altogether modern air, indicating, in its contrast with that of their contemporaries, the approach of a new era—a change from what seems the mere contention of brute force to the finer displays of an intellectual contest; and that change is, in fact, partly attributable to the example and influence of those who, foremost in the arena, were victorious by their greater skill and the superiority of their weapons.[6]

In the four dukes of Burgundy, on the other hand, the material of the character was coarser and more robust—a nature better suited, it might seem, for a struggle with matter than with mind. Physically they were superior to their kinsmen. Charles the Seventh, we are told, had an imposing exterior—when arrayed in a long robe that covered up his crooked and shrunken legs.[7] The mean and meagre person of Louis the Eleventh formed a common subject of derision. Charles the Sixth and Charles of Berri were almost as feeble in body as in intellect. But the dukes of Burgundy were cast in a different mould. Their limbs were stout, their forms were sinewy and compact. They were redoubtable

[6] See the remarks of Guizot on the substitution by Louis XI. of moral for material means. Civilisation in Europe (Eng. trans.), p. 321.

[7] "Cum togatus esset, satis eleganti specie apparebat; sed cum curta veste indueretur, quod faciebat frequentius, panno viridis utens coloris, eum exilitas cruris et tibiarum, cum utriusque poplitis tumore et versus se invicem quadam velut inflexione, deformem utcumque ostentabant." Histoire des Règnes de Charles VII. et de Louis XI., par Thomas Basin, Évêque de Lisieux (3 vols., Paris, 1855–1858), tom. i. p. 312.—This work, one of the most important though least impartial authorities for the period of which it treats, is usually cited by French historians under the pseudonym of Amelgardus. M. Quicherat, by whom it has been edited and published for the first time, has fully established the identity of the author—a distinguished Norman prelate and an active partisan in the reign of Louis XI.

in the tourney, terrible in the battle-field. Their mental qualities were of the same hard and inflexible stuff. Arrogant audacity, headstrong impetuosity, unyielding stubbornness, were their main characteristics. They never won their way by flattery, sophistry, or cunning, but sought to carry every point by an overbearing presumption and indomitable will. The epithets affixed to their names were, "the Bold," "the Rash," "the Fearless;"[8] those of the other line were, "the Wise," "the Cunning," "the Well-served." There was no strain of delicate and intuitive perceptions in any of the Burgundian princes; there was no poet among them like Charles of Orleans, no scholar, versed in the subtleties of the schools, like Louis of Orleans, no far-sighted statesman like Charles the Fifth, no master of intrigue like Louis the Eleventh, no shrinking spirit, unnerved by scruples, distracted by calamity, like Charles the Sixth and the Duke of Berri. Yet in some respects their nature was the nobler of the two. If less acute, they were more ardent; if less persuasive, they were more logical; if less ductile and less humane, they were more equitable and more trustworthy. They were better fathers and better sons; and if unrelenting in their hate and remorseless in their vengeance, they never deserted an ally, left fidelity unrewarded, or receiving benefits forgot the benefactor. Their intellect was vigorous, their conceptions were sometimes lofty, their plans coherent, their energies untiring. They laboured with strength and skill, but with little light, building where the ancient dikes had been destroyed,

[8] Philip the Good, as we shall see hereafter, was not indebted for this very different cognomen to any exemption from the peculiarities of his race; and even he, during a part of his career, was called "the Resolute" (l'Asseuré).

and where the tide was rushing in to sweep away their work.

These, it will be said, were the general lineaments of the era that was passing away—its iron force, its narrow and exclusive spirit. This is true; and it was because the dukes of Burgundy not only held the most conspicuous place among feudal princes, but exhibited alike in their powers and their defects the complete impress of feudalism, that its fate became involved in theirs, and was decided by their overthrow.

In John the Fearless, the successor of Philip the Bold, the faults inherent in his race assumed their most repulsive form. His habitual taciturnity masked a contracted mind and a character singularly audacious and unscrupulous. In such natures ambition, unennobled by conscious power, by patient hopes, or generous purposes, becomes a sordid passion, which encounters obstacles with a sullen violence, and regards a competitor with envious and malignant eyes. Between John and the object of his ambition stood a rival, in whose character he saw with instinctive aversion the opposite of his own. Louis, Duke of Orleans, the brother of the insane king, had rare endowments of intellect and splendid accomplishments of person and of mind, which would have opened an easy path to distinction to one of inferior rank.[9] But his vices were as conspicuous as the nobler traits of his character; and, as they were not such vices as are engendered by the steady and cautious pursuit of self-interest, they excited

[9] See the character (partial, no doubt, since it represents his life as free from stain after he had attained to manhood, but bearing, nevertheless, marks of veracity as well as of intimate knowledge) drawn of him by the Religieux de Saint-Denys, Chronique (6 vols. 4to., Paris, 1839–1852), tom. iii. p. 738.

in the public mind not only scandal but alarm. In concert with the queen, the infamous Isabella of Bavaria, with whom he was suspected of maintaining an incestuous intimacy, the Duke of Orleans had for several years attempted to administer the affairs of the kingdom. If it had been possible to misgovern the nation without calling on it to defray the cost of misgovernment, the people would have suffered in apathy. Conscious of its feebleness, France did not aspire to action; it longed only for repose. In the condition of the royal imbecile, whom it regarded with so much reverence and affection, with loyalty and with pity unblended with contempt, it saw the image of its own. It would fain like him have moped in quiet and inanity; but like him it was harassed by quacks and tortured into frenzy.

By the people, and especially by the inhabitants of Paris and the larger towns, the Duke of Orleans was regarded as the author of their calamities, the Duke of Burgundy as their destined deliverer. The latter would be able to carry on the government without taxes. The lord of wealthy Flanders would not need to wring from the impoverished citizens their miserable earnings. He had strenuously protested against the imposition of these intolerable burdens, declaring that the revenues derived from the royal domain ought to suffice for the ordinary expenses of the state. If forces were required for the defence of the realm, his subjects were ready to obey the summons of the king, and take the field in numbers sufficient for that purpose. Such were the representations industriously circulated by his agents, and received with easy credence by the people.[10]

[10] Religieux de Saint-Denys, tom. iii. pp. 300, 302, 340, et al.—Basin, tom. i. lib. 1, cap. 3, 4.

The people, however, was still too weak to be the arbiter of such a quarrel. The Duke of Orleans was supported not only by his own vassals, but by the great body of the nobility. In military strength the two parties, as they mustered around the capital, were nearly equally balanced. Hence they were induced to listen to the proposals of those who desired to avert the outbreak of civil war. It was agreed that the two princes should govern in concert, and unite their efforts for the restoration of order and tranquillity. And, although events soon demonstrated the futility of this arrangement, it was renewed and confirmed by solemn assurances and pledges of mutual good faith. The princes met in public and embraced each other; they exchanged the devices which they had adopted as the symbols of defiance; they slept in the same bed; they partook together of the communion, and in presence of the consecrated elements ratified their alliance by solemn vows.

In this reconciliation the intentions of Louis of Orleans were perhaps not insincere. He was a man capable of deeply injuring his dearest friend, but capable also of forgiving, and from the heart, his bitterest enemy.[11] He had on his conscience the burden of great sins and disastrous follies. But the consciousness of guilt had not hardened his heart, or extinguished its finer feelings. He had recently recovered from an illness, during which he had meditated upon the errors of his past life, and given evidence of a sincere con-

[11] In his will, made about this period—"testament fort chrétien, fort pieux, plein de charité et de pénitence"—he commends his children to the protection of the Duke of Burgundy. Michelet, Hist. de France, tom. iv. p. 141.

trition. He had especially manifested a desire, such as men feel when inward perplexities cause the struggles of the world to fade into insignificance, to live in future at peace with all men. On the evening of November 23, 1407, while he was supping with the queen at a small private mansion which belonged to her in Paris, a summons was brought him to attend a sitting of the council. The house stood in an obscure quarter of the town. He quitted it with an escort of four or five persons. The night was intensely dark. Preceded by a torchbearer, and followed by the rest of his attendants, the duke rode along upon his mule, humming a song and carelessly playing with his glove. Suddenly he was surrounded by armed men, who rushed upon him from an ambush. His followers, with the exception of a single page, were separated from him and put to flight. The inhabitants of the street, summoned to their windows by a tumult of voices, the clanking of steel and the glare of torches, were warned by a stern command to close their lattices and remain within doors. Peering and listening, however, they could distinguish every sight and sound—the swords and axes brandished by the murderers, their oaths and shouts, the challenge of the victim after he had been struck—"What means this? whence comes this?"—the repetition of the blows and thrusts, the struggle, the fall, the consummation of the bloody deed. A tall man with a red hat slouched over his eyes made his appearance to investigate the work and decide whether it were satisfactorily performed.[12] Another stroke was given, to complete the

[12] This personage was probably Raoullet d'Actonville, a Norman gentleman, who had been deprived by the Duke of Orleans of an office conferred upon him by Philip the Bold. (Monstrelet, tom. i. p. 214.) He is men-

assurance. Then the assailants hastened away, the lights disappeared, the narrow street was again silent and dark. The trembling spectators, now thronging to the spot, found the body of the Duke of Orleans, gashed, mutilated, pierced in a hundred places. The right arm was severed from the trunk; the left hand, cut off at the wrist, had been thrown to a distance; the intestines had gushed forth; the skull was crushed, and the brains were scattered in the mud. The page lay stretched across his dead master, not wholly lifeless, but moaning and about to expire.[13]

This murder was the source of greater public calamities than have resulted from any similar event recorded in history. Long after it had been signally avenged, the blood thus shed continued to be the cause of bloodshed. It fecundated the pestilential seeds which had lain undeveloped and inert. A hydra-headed mischief sprang into existence, with which human energy seemed powerless to cope.[14] And even after this had been destroyed, and when more than a century had elapsed, the traditional and hereditary quarrel thus commenced served to embitter the relations and perpetuate the rivalry between the sovereigns of France and of the Netherlands.[15]

tioned by most of the authorities as having planned or conducted the affair.

[13] See the depositions of the witnesses—terribly minute and graphic—in the Hist. de l'Académie des Inscriptions, tom. xxi. p. 515–540, where M. Bonamy has collected all the testimony on the subject, besides identifying the spot where the murder was committed and giving a plan of the locality.

[14] "Caput et origo omnium calamitatum in regno. . . . Seminarium illud pestiferum . . . adeo alte radices miserat, ut vix post annos quinquaginta exstirpari atque eradicari potuerit; imo certe nec adhuc, his temporibus, prorsus exstinctum sit, sed more hydræ serpentis, uno succiso capite, alia renascantur." Basin, tom. i. p. 11, 44.

[15] It is to be remembered, in this connection, that, about a century later, the family of Orleans came to the French throne in the persons of Louis XII. and Francis I. One familiar with

Nor was the immediate impression on the public mind less than such a deed was calculated to produce. Men stood paralysed as they beheld the form so familiar to their eyes—a form so fair, associated in their minds with much that was evil, but also with much that was chivalrous and good—carried bloody and inanimate through the streets of Paris. If he had sinned deeply, so much deeper the guilt of those who had treacherously cut him off in the midst of his sins. And no one doubted by what hand the blow had been given. All eyes turned from the corpse of the murdered man to the kinsman who had so lately sworn to live with him in fraternal peace.[16] When the officers appointed to search out the guilty parties appeared before the council, and asked for authority to pursue their investigations in the households of the royal princes, John the Fearless turned pale and trembled. Taking the Dukes of Berri and Anjou aside, he confessed to them that he, "instigated by the devil and by evil counsellors," had caused his cousin to be slain.[17] Then, in the confusion and shame of avowed guilt, he abruptly quitted the assembly, and withdrew to his own house.

A great criminal, convicted in the presence of mankind, but inaccessible to human justice, has before him

the diplomatic correspondence and conferences between the French and Imperial ministers in the sixteenth century—when it was customary to discuss the historical questions connected with every point from their remotest origin—will probably not consider the statement in the text exaggerated.

[16] Fenin, after mentioning that the Duke of Burgundy was present at the burial, adds that blood was seen to flow through the coffin: "Dont y en eut grant murmure de ceux qui là estoient, et de tels y en eut qui bien se doubtoient de ce qui en estoit." Mémoires (ed. Dupont), p. 3.

[17] "Instiguante dyabolo." Religieux de Saint-Denys.—"Par hayne diabolique et maulvais conseil." Alain Chartier.—"Par l'introduction de l'ennemi." Monstrelet.

this alternative: to repent of his crime, to expiate it, to renounce the unhallowed fruits of it; or to brave his own conscience, to defy the opinion of his fellow-men, and boldly to seize upon the prize the hope of which had tempted him to the commission of the guilty act. He has incurred the detestation of the world: if he would avoid its scorn, he must strike terror into it, or he must surrender his immunities and sue for its forgiveness. Throughout the Middle Ages there had not been wanting instances of great nobles and princes who, midway in a career of guilty ambition, had been suddenly arrested by the alarms of conscience, and who, parting with rank and wealth, had spent the remainder of their days in seclusion, penance, and remorse.

But in the breast of John the Fearless the voice of self-reproach and self-abhorrence was quickly stifled. The evil spirit that had instigated him reassumed its sway. On the day following that on which confession had been wrung from him by a torture stronger than the rack, he would again have taken his seat among the princes at the council-board, and, being forbidden to enter the palace, sent them word to charge no one else with what had been done, since he was himself the sole author of the act,[18] He immediately quitted Paris, and, though hotly pursued, succeeded in making his escape to Flanders. Here he was not only safe, but able to turn upon his enemies. Having collected a sufficient force for his protection, he again took his way towards the capital, which he re-entered amidst the greetings and triumphant shouts of the inhabitants. This was not altogether fear, or fickleness, or indifference to the right,

[18] "Affin qu'on ne mescroye mie de la mort du Duc d'Orléans, j'ay faict faire ce qui a esté faict, et non autre." Fenin, p. 4.

but a revulsion of feeling, to be explained by their long adherence to the Duke of Burgundy, and the hopes and confidence which had centred in him as the champion of their rights.[19] They would have condemned him still, had he still seemed to condemn himself. But he was ready now to uphold what he had done, to justify it by such reasons as showed them to have been accessories to the deed, and made them participants in the advantages that were to flow from it. While the ghastly spectacle was still exposed to sight, their faltering spirit had infected his. They were now called upon to collect their scattered senses, and recognise in the blow that had been struck the deliverance which they had expected at his hands. He had brought with him a learned theologian, a doctor of the University of Paris, to act as his spokesman, and set forth the motives by which he had been governed; to prove that the Duke of Orleans, as a tyrant and a usurper, had merited death; that any subject, but above all any member of the royal family, had the right to kill him; that the Duke of Burgundy ought not to have been restrained by the promises and oaths which he had made, since these had been prejudicial to the public welfare; and that the manner of the killing was indifferent, treachery and secret ambuscade being

[19] Hallam (Supplemental Notes, p. 57) finds it inexplicable that Michelet should represent the populace of Paris, the adherents of John, as lamenting the death of the Duke of Orleans. "What," he asks, "is the meaning of this love for one who, he has just told us, was cursed by the people? How did they show their affection for the Duke of Orleans when they were openly and vehemently the partisans of his murderer?" And he cites their reception of the Duke of Burgundy, on his return, as sufficient to refute this notion. But the inconsistency, if such it can be called, belongs not to the historian, but to human nature. Was not Byron admired, pitied, and even beloved by those whose censure and coldness drove him into exile?

in such a case the natural means for its accomplishment. All this was supported and illustrated by many examples from Holy Writ, and the conclusion satisfactorily deduced that the act had been not merely innocent, but in the highest degree meritorious.[20]

Yet those who heard this discourse were not altogether satisfied.[21] Nor was the murderer. The brazen pride with which he fronted accusation and reproach was a mask that but half concealed the traces of his conscious humiliation. Something more was necessary to purge his mind of its uneasy sensations. He insisted that the young princes of Orleans, the children of his victim, should consent to a reconciliation with him. But, coupled with the justification which he had put forth, his prayer for forgiveness sounded like a fresh insult to the dead.

By the perpetration of an enormous crime the Duke of Burgundy seemed to have cut his way through the sole obstruction in his path, and to have reached at once the supremacy to which he had aspired in the government of France. But this crime had in fact rendered all government impossible. It had let loose a storm of turbulent passions that had long been gathering in the atmosphere; it had stirred up all the hostile elements of society in a wild vortex of confusion. What followed was not so much civil war as total anarchy, the disorganization of the political and social systems. Out of these disorders grew a foreign war, the invasion and

[20] The admirable discourse of Maître Jean Petit is given at length by Monstrelet (ed. Buchon), tom. i. pp. 241-324.

[21] See the cautiously-worded censure of the Religieux de Saint-Denys, who was present. Chronique, tom. iii. p. 765.

conquest of the country by Henry the Fifth. A stern and powerful enemy stood over prostrate France, inflicting wounds from which the blood flowed in a perpetual stream.

The light of history becomes here a lurid gleam, and reveals a stage crowded with demoniacal shapes, that pursue each other through the mazes of what is called by a contemporary writer a "doleful dance." [22]

The crown rested on the head of a lunatic. The discord in the royal family and the royal counsels prevented any serious effort to restore order and tranquillity. The voice of authority was not merely unheeded, but unheard.

The administration of the law, so far as the protection of life or property was concerned, was entirely suspended. Murder and rapine no longer sought their prey by stealth, or waited for the darkness to conceal their work. The country was covered with armed bands, wearing the badges of Burgundy or the Armagnacs, but subject in fact to no other leader than him who could best scent the plunder and guide them in the pursuit. These brigands infested every highway, and ravaged villages and farms, pursuing the work of destruction without hinderance and without fear. The peasantry, driven to despair, abandoned at length their ruined homes and wasted fields, their wives and children, their life of industry and care, and fled in troops to the refuge of the thick forests, seeking sustenance with the wild beasts, crouching from the sunlight that shone upon an

[22] "Non pas un an ne deux, mais il y a ja quatorze ou quinze ans que cette *danse douloureuse* commença; et la plus grant partie des seigneurs en sont morts à glaive, ou par poison, ou par trayson." Journal de Paris sous les Règnes de Charles VI. et de Charles VII., anno 1421.

earth of which the devil, they exclaimed, was about to take entire possession.[23]

France had never been a commercial country. It had few great market-towns, few public fairs, and these were scarcely visited by the foreign merchant. But now even domestic trade had disappeared. Production itself was at a stand-still. Those parts of the country which had the richest soil, and had formerly furnished the largest supplies of food, returned to the condition of wild lands. An eyewitness describes the vast and fertile plains of Normandy, Picardy, Champagne, and La Brie as almost entirely depopulated, overgrown with bushes and wild brambles, and even in many parts, so long did this state of things continue, with dense and lofty forests.[24] The fields were tilled only within such a distance of towns or castles as allowed the labourers, when the enemy came in sight, to summon assistance with their horns;[25] but the patches from which a furtive harvest was thus gathered were as nothing compared with the immense region that lay sterile and deserted.[26]

[23] "Disant l'ung à l'autre, 'Que ferons nous? Mettons tout en la main du deable, ne nous chault que nous devenions; . . . . il nous fault renyer femmes et enffans, et fouir aux boys comme bestes esgarées.'" Journal de Paris, loc. cit. And see Basin, tom. i. p. 15, et al.

[24] "Vidimus ipsi Campaniæ totius vastissimos agros, totius Belciæ, Briæ, Gastinati, Carnotensis, Drocensis, Cenomanniæ et Pertici, Vellocassium seu Vulgacinorum, tam Franciæ, quam Normanniæ, Bellovacensium, Caletensium, a Sequana usque Ambianis et Abbatisvillam, Silvanectensium, Suessionum et Valisiorum usque Laudunum, et ultra versus Hannoniam, prorsus desertos, incultos, squalidos et colonis nudatos, dumetis et rubis opletos, atque illic in plerisque terris, quæ ad proferendas arbores feraciores exsistunt, arbores in morem densissimarum silvarum excrevisse." Basin, tom. i. p. 45. See also p. 118, et al.

[25] Idem, tom. i., p. 45.—He adds that the cattle and swine, becoming accustomed to the signal, fled, without waiting to be driven, to their places of refuge.

[26] "Tantillum illud quod veluti furtim circum munitiones colebatur,

If we enter the walled cities, thus isolated by a perpetual blockade, a still more fearful spectacle presents itself. A citizen of Paris, who in the simplest language noted down from day to day the occurrences that came under his own observation, has left us the means of making this survey. Terror reigned in that capital where it has so often sat enthroned. Princes and ministers, the University and the Parliament, the nobles and the bourgeoisie, having successively failed in the attempt to devise a practicable system of government, to restore order and peace, to replace on its original foundations the structure that had been overturned, the task was undertaken by the lowest classes of the populace, the rabble and the outcasts of humanity, brought up by these strange convulsions from unmentionable depths to the surface and apex of society. The leaders were chosen for their physical strength, their superiority in courage or ferocity. The "short method" they adopted was massacre. At first it was practised with some form and regularity: every one suspected as a traitor or a foe was apprehended and put to death.[27] But soon a thirst for blood was awakened that suffered no delay and no selection of the victims. While the frenzy raged the whole town presented the aspect of a slaughter-house: neither old age nor youth was spared; neither church nor convent afforded shelter; and the bodies of men, women, and children were seen scattered at short intervals through all the principal streets.[28]

minimum et prope nihil videbatur, comparatione vastissimorum agrorum, qui deserti prorsus et sine cultoribus permanebant." Idem, p. 46.

[27] Basin, tom. i., lib. 1, cap. 12.

[28] The summer of 1418, when the Armagnacs, who for a while had held possession of the city, were again overpowered, witnessed a succession of these terrible *émeutes*. "Si n'eussiez trouvé à Paris rue de nom, ou n'eust aucune occision. . . . . Estoient en tas

But there was a panic in the hapless city greater even than that excited by the fury of the mob or the tyranny of faction. The armies that hovered incessantly around the walls had devastated the country within a circuit of twenty leagues. From month to month, from year to year, the price of bread continued to rise, until the scarcity was such that the bakers' shops were daily besieged by crowds who struggled for admittance, and only those were supplied who had waited at the doors from dawn.[29] Troops of destitute wretches wandered about the streets in search of offal which the swine had refused, or ran to the fields without the walls to devour the carcasses of slaughtered dogs.[30] Winter—more rigorous in the same latitude than now[31]—had no pity on this homeless, starving multitude. Everywhere, every hour, a terrible cry was heard, "I am dying of hunger; I am dying of cold!"[32]

War and famine speedily generated pestilence. "With this triple scourge of divine justice," says a contem-

comme porcs au milieu de la boe. . . . Dimenche 29 May, à Paris, mors à l'espée ou d'autres armes en my les ruës, sans aucuns qui furent tuez ès maisons cinq cens vingt et deux hommes." Journal de Paris, sub anno.

[29] Idem, anno 1420.—He gives, at intervals, the prices of the different articles of food, thus exhibiting the continual and enormous increase. There is often a peculiar pathos in these simple statistics: "Item, les petits enffens ne mangerent point de lait; car pinte coustoit dix deniers ou douze." Anno 1419.

[30] Idem, annis 1420, 1421.

[31] Many facts scattered through the chronicles of the fifteenth century attest this statement. The winters of 1407-1408 and 1420-1421 were peculiarly severe.

[32] "Ouyssez parmy Paris piteux plains, piteux crys, piteuses lamentations, et petiz enfans crier: 'Je meurs de faim;' et sur les fumiers . . . pussiez trouver cy dix, cy vingt ou trente enfans, fils et filles, qui là mouroient de faim et de froit; et n'estoit si dur cueur qui *par nuyt* les ouist crier: 'Hélas! je meurs de faim,' qui grant pitié n'en eust. Mais les pouvres mesnaigiers ne leur pouvaient aider; car on n'avoit ne pain, ne blé, ne buche, ne charbon. . . . Jour et nuyt crioient hommes, femmes, petiz enffans: 'Helas! je meurs de froit,' l'autre de faim." Journal de Paris, anno 1420.

porary, too young, indeed, at the time to know the full extent and import of these calamities, but writing while the evidence and the effects were still fresh before his eyes, "was the country afflicted, not for a short period, but during many successive years."[33] In 1418 fifty thousand persons were said to have died in Paris in less than five weeks.[34] The bodies were flung by hundreds into huge pits dug for their reception. Packs of famished wolves came at night and feasted in the cemeteries, and sometimes ventured, in the broad daylight, to seek their prey among the living.[35] "Such scenes of misery," says the diarist so frequently quoted, "the prophet Jeremiah saw not when Jerusalem was destroyed." "Alas!" he exclaims, "never since the time of Clovis, the first Christian king, was France so divided, so desolate."[36]

It seemed, indeed, as if this were the final agony of the nation, as if the hour of its dissolution were at hand. Lingering over the record of these horrors, we forget for a moment that they were not only suffered but survived; we lose the vision of the country's after-greatness, and stand as it were mute and awe-struck in the presence of Death.

But the vitality of France is indestructible. The French nation is the only one which has maintained an uninterrupted existence from the fall of the Roman

[33] Basin, tom. i., p. 117.

[34] Journal de Paris, sub anno. To this statement, sufficiently hard of credence,—the probable number of the population not exceeding 300,000,—is appended another, which baffles even the imagination: "Ceulx qui faisoient les fosses et cymetieres de Paris, affermoient qu'entre la Nativité de Nostre-Dame et sa Conception, avoient enterré de la Ville de Paris plus de cent mille personnes, et en quatre ou cinq cens n'en mouroit pas douze anciens, que tous enffens et jeunes gens."

[35] Idem, anno 1421.

[36] "Helas, je ne cuide mie que depuis le Roi Clovis, qui fut le premier Roy Chrestien, que France fust aussi désolée et divisée." Idem, anno 1419.

power down to the present day; and this long career has been marked throughout by the strangest vicissitudes —alternations of glory and disaster, of misrule and revolution. France has more than once been overrun and conquered, and its territory dismembered; it has been a prey to every variety of civil war—wars of factions, of classes, and of creeds; its administrative system has been disorganized under weak governments; its liberties have been trodden down by despotic governments; it has languished for long periods under institutions oppressive and corrupt; it has cut itself loose at a single stroke from its ancient traditions; it has maintained an attitude of hostility against the world, and, after unexampled and intoxicating triumphs, has tasted the bitter dregs of humiliation and defeat;—yet all these changes, convulsions, and reverses have not impaired the foundations of the state or weakened the energies of the people; the oldest of the powers of Christendom, France is still the first, exerting a greater influence than any other, exciting greater hopes and greater fears.

With a people so deficient in calmness and solidity, but so full of ardour and intelligence; so exalted in victory, but so elastic in defeat; so impatient of restraint, yet so capable of discipline and of concert;—with a country so nobly situated and possessed of so great resources; open to invasion, yet marked out by nature for the home of a great people and the seat of an empire;[37]—it was not possible that France should present that spectacle of gradual and steady development

[37] In the speeches and writings of Burke there is more than one splendid passage descriptive of the greatness of France and the immensity of her internal resources; and in conversation he is reported—but probably with little

which England has presented; but neither was it possible that, like Italy or Spain, it should sink into hopeless imbecility and lingering decay. Its convulsive struggles are the throes not of death, but of regeneration. When torpor seems already to have crept to the vital parts, it rouses from its lethargy. At the moment of its greatest weakness, it is suddenly endued with fresh strength, and rising like a Titan from the earth, it starts forward on a new career.[38]

In the great crisis of the fifteenth century, a period barren of noble characters and noble deeds, fruitful only of misery and crime, was followed by one of those epochs in which poetry claims an equal share with history. The story of the Maid of Orleans seems, indeed, to lead us upon ground glorified by the brilliant atmosphere of romance. We see the fervid sentiments that in an earlier age had given birth to chivalry rekindled by the simple faith and ardent imagination of a peasant girl. If from such a quarter hope dawned once more upon a despairing people, it was because the same spirit that wrought so powerfully in her had silently breathed itself into them—because their minds had been prepared by long affliction and utter hopelessness of human succour to listen to a voice that promised aid from Heaven.

Joan of Arc represents the religious and heroic ele-

correctness—as having drawn a comparison between France and England as the sun and the moon of the general political system, the one having all she needs within herself, the other drawing all from abroad. (Rogers's Table Talk, Amer. ed. p. 100.) But the British empire is far more than a mere European power. Its history, its resources, and its influence are not those of a single country, a single nation, or a single quarter of the globe.

[38] "Tantà è la virtù e fortuna di quel regno," remarks the Venetian minister M. Soriano, writing at a time when France again lay prostrate, "che somministra sempre nuove forze dove è maggior il bisogno."

ments of the reaction. But other elements entered largely into the movement, and contributed to its final success. Some sources of disunion in the kingdom were already dried up. The hostile factions began to approach each other with overtures of peace when they found that their animosity had only given to the one a more powerful enemy, to the other a master. The English conquest had lost its main pillar by the death of Henry the Fifth; and England herself was beginning to be visited by that train of evils with which her rival had been so long afflicted—a feeble-minded prince, a long minority, divided counsels, and civil war. In the same year in which that dauntless mind, full of lofty ideas, of energy, and of fortitude, was laid at rest, the insane king, Charles the Sixth, ended his unhappy life. The dauphin, now Charles the Seventh, was placed by this event in a stronger position for claiming the popular support than he had occupied when denounced as a rebel against his father's authority, and while destitute of those nominal rights which exert such an influence over the mass of mankind. Nor did he entirely lack the qualities befitting one who had to conquer his inheritance and raise anew the fallen structure of the monarchy. He had, indeed, great defects—a character suggesting a comparison in some points with that of a monarch whose fortunes have an ostensible similarity with his—Charles the Second of England. Like the latter, he was fond of pleasure, averse to business, ungrateful in a degree that exceeded the proverbial ingratitude of princes. He had also the same imperturbable temper, the same coolness of judgment, but greater talents, and a mind capable when aroused of active exertion, and of firmness mingled with

1422.

moderation. From the mass of adherents, of diverse opinions and discordant characters, that surrounded him, he succeeded at length in sifting out a body of advisers, some of them men of humble origin, few of them connected with the great nobility, but admirably suited by their personal qualities to concoct and carry out measures that were the best calculated to restore liberty and prosperity to the kingdom. For Charles "the Well-served" the prouder appellation was in store of Charles "the Victorious."

Thus reanimated and directed, France put forth all her energies in the struggle in which her independence, her very existence, was at stake. Step by step the English receded from the line of conquest; province after province expelled them from its bounds; until not only their recent acquisitions, but their earliest possessions—the territory won by the valour, and still known by the name, of those northern warriors and sea-kings by whom Saxon England had since been subjugated and governed; the dowry brought by Eleanor of Guienne to the wisest of the Plantagenets, a heritage retained by his descendants for more than three centuries—were torn from their grasp and lost to them for ever. In Calais alone the standard of Saint George still floated over French soil.

Before glancing at the pacification of the country, and its gradual return to a state of order and security under Charles the Seventh, it is necessary that we should again take up a thread which connects in a more particular manner the earlier portions of this chapter with the main body of our narrative.

John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy, appears on the

stage of history as a principal figure in the opening act of a great and terrible drama. But he cannot be said to have played an important part in the tumultuous and impassioned scenes that followed. He was the most powerful member of the nobility and the leader of a faction; but he had almost as little to do with shaping the course of events as the meanest of his adherents. He was alike powerless to remedy the disorders of the government, to crush the various forces that rose in resistance to his usurpation, and to maintain a commanding influence over the action of his own party. After struggling for more than five years amidst the impetuous conflict of opposing currents, he was compelled, in 1414, to resign the helm into the hands of his enemies and retire to his own dominions.

But the party of the Armagnacs was equally incompetent to carry on the government. It could neither maintain war nor re-establish peace. It was prostrated at Azincourt, and it was repudiated by the people. The Duke of Burgundy renewed the contest; in 1418 he again made himself master of the capital. Then followed various abortive efforts to bring about a reconciliation between the two parties, and to unite them in effective resistance to the common enemy. Several treaties with this object were successively framed, sworn to, and disregarded. They failed because on the one side there were suspicions, well-grounded fears, never absent from the breast of him who in earlier days had won for himself the title of "the Fearless;"[39] because on

[39] According to some accounts, this name had been given him, while Count of Nevers, for his cool intrepidity in presence of the Sultan Bajazet, after the fatal battle of Nicopolis, when the flower of the Christian chivalry perished in the field, and the greater number of the prisoners were ruthlessly massacred.

the other side there was a fierce hate, a thirst for vengeance only to be satisfied by blood.

Doubtless the Duke of Burgundy longed for a reconciliation. He knew well that his present position was untenable, that it was but the elevation of a wave which, when its force was spent, would fall away beneath him. The English monarch was advancing upon Paris, and his march was not to be delayed by negotiations. The dauphin was in the hands of the Armagnacs; and though only a boy, his presence seemed to give them as plausible a claim to exercise the functions of the government as the Duke of Burgundy had derived from his seizure of the king's person. It was necessary that he should either make peace with his enemies or unite himself with the enemies of his country; and, although he had not hesitated at the commencement of the troubles to appeal to these latter for assistance, he was not prepared by direct and absolute treason to give up France into their possession.

There may have been a still deeper feeling in his mind which led him to desire peace with the opposite faction. Such a peace was perhaps necessary to his internal quiet. He may have thought that a complete and sincere reconciliation would blot out the foul transaction which had raised against him and within him a cry of horror and reproach; he may have hoped by an earnest co-operation with the Orleanists in defence of the country to undo the mischief of which to so large an extent he was the author. No chronicler will enable us to penetrate the depths in which, if anywhere, this feeling had its abode. Yet, judging from his language

as well as from his conduct, we may well believe that it existed.

In very despair of knowing whom to trust, he confided in traitors—in the agents and emissaries employed to lure him to destruction. He consented to have an interview with the dauphin, at which all the impediments that had prevented the observance of the treaties already made should be removed. Such of his advisers as were faithful to him endeavoured to dissuade him from so perilous a step; but, after a season of deliberation, he determined on fulfilling his engagement. "It is my duty," he said, "to risk my person for the chance of securing so great a blessing as peace. I desire peace at any sacrifice." And he added, "When peace is made, I will take the dauphin's people and lead them against the English. There are amongst them brave men and able captains. Then we shall see who is to prevail, Hannotin of Flanders (the nickname given him by his subjects in the Netherlands) or Harry of Lancaster."

On his way to the appointed place, the bridge of Montereau, other warnings reached him; but he put them aside, as if weary of a long inward struggle, and resolved to yield to the decision of fate. Accompanied by his suite, consisting of ten persons armed only with the swords ordinarily worn on occasions of ceremony, he presented himself before a strong wooden barrier which had been erected on the bridge, and, having taken the customary oath, was admitted through a narrow gate. Those who held the passage, as if apprehensive that the crowd collected without might attempt to force an entrance, called sharply on the duke's attend-

ants to hasten their steps; and his secretary, who came last, was taken hold of by the arm and pulled within the enclosure. The gate was then shut and securely fastened.

The dauphin, with an equal number of followers, had passed through a barrier at the opposite end of the bridge, where he still remained, awaiting the duke's approach. The latter, after rapidly traversing the intermediate space, uncovered and knelt before his sovereign's son, and in emphatic language proclaimed his loyalty to the crown, his desire of devoting himself to the extirpation of the evils with which the country was oppressed, and his readiness to enter into such engagements as might be considered necessary for that object.[40] A courteous answer was returned; he was requested to rise; and the two princes, retiring a little apart, engaged in amicable conversation.

Meanwhile the barrier had been again unfastened by its treacherous keepers. A small body of men, in full armour, quitted a place of concealment near the river and approached the gate. Tanneguy Duchâtel, the principal contriver of the plot, came behind the duke, pushed him between the shoulders with a hatchet or small battle-axe, which he had carried without attracting

[40] "Mondit Seigneur s'en ala devers lui, et osta son aumusse qui estoit de veloux noir, et se inclina devant luy d'un genoul jusques à terre, en le saluant moult humblement, en lui disant en effet les paroles qui s'ensuivent: c'est assavoir qu'apres Dieu, il n'avoit qu'à servir et obeïr q'au Roy et à luy, et en leur service, à la conservation du Royaulme, offrit à mettre et employer corps, bien, amis, alliez et bienveillans . . . en disant pour [lors ?] feu mondit Seigneur au dit Daulphin et à ses gens, 'Monsieur et entre vous Messieurs, dy-je bien?' Et ces paroles dittes luy dist, 'Biau-Cousin, vous dittes si bien que l'on ne pourroit mieulx, levez-vous et vous couvrez,' en le tenant par la main." Deposition de Maistre Jean Seguinat, secretaire de Jean, Duc de Bourgogne, Mémoires pour servir à l'Hist. de France et de Bourgogne (4to., Paris, 1729), p. 273.

observation, and in a loud voice denounced him as a traitor. This served as a signal to the assassins, who, with furious cries of "Kill! kill!" now rushed towards the spot. The assault was too sudden to allow of either resistance or escape. Swords and axes flashed above the duke's head. The first stroke laid bare his skull and cheek-bone, and nearly severed the arm which he had raised instinctively to guard his face. Other blows were given before he fell. His attendants were made prisoners, with the exception of one, who succeeded in climbing the barrier. Another, the Sire de Noailles, had received a mortal wound while attempting to defend his master. When the tumult had subsided, a man knelt down beside the duke, and, perceiving that he still gave signs of life, thrust a sword far into his body. A last gasp was heard, and John the Fearless expired. The vengeance that had waited twelve years for its opportunity was satisfied.[41]

Philip, Count of Charolais, the son and successor of the murdered prince, was at Ghent when the tidings reached him of this horrible tragedy. "Michelle," he said to his wife, a daughter of Charles the Sixth, "your brother has assassinated my father." He summoned his friends and the Estates of his provinces, and took counsel as to the course which he should pursue. It was now his turn to seek revenge, and the means of obtaining it were obvious and easy. A treaty of alliance between the new Duke of Burgundy and Henry the Fifth opened to the latter the gates of Paris, and placed him in virtual possession of the French crown. Thus France was again condemned to pay the heavy

[41] Meurtre de Jean, dit sans peur, Mém. pour servir à l'Hist. de France de Bourgogne, pp. 209–354.

penalty incurred by its treacherous and blood-stained princes.

As long as Henry lived Philip took an active part in the prosecution of the war against the dauphin; and the conqueror's dying charge to the guardians of his son was to preserve at any cost the friendship of the Duke of Burgundy. But the counsel of the dead had little hold upon a man who, like the Duke of Gloucester, the regent of England, would have sacrificed a kingdom to the gratification of a whim. Yet though Philip, disgusted at the slights he received, gradually cooled towards his allies, and ceased to afford them an earnest co-operation in the conduct of the war, it was long before he could be induced by the persuasions of such of his counsellors as were friendly to the French cause to listen to the proposals made to him for transferring his allegiance to his rightful sovereign. He could not, however, be uninfluenced by the altered fortunes of the combatants, by the tide that was bearing Charles the Seventh to his ancestral throne, and breaking up the foundations of that foreign rule which Philip himself had so powerfully aided in establishing. Nor was he unmoved by the spectacle of a nation emerging from discord, recovering from unheard-of calamities, and appealing to him to remove the obstacles that still existed to the restoration of union and internal peace. His disposition, too, although he had the fiery temper and tenacious purpose of his race, was not warlike. His states were weary of a fruitless contest, which, though carried on with little vigour, interfered with their commerce and exposed their frontiers to continual annoyance. The Church was ready to relieve him of his scruples as to a treaty which conflicted with the terms of his alliance

with the English. Charles the Seventh offered all possible atonement for a crime in which he declared himself to have had no share, and which might well have been washed out by the blood so profusely shed during an interval of sixteen years. In fine, Philip's vanity was flattered, in the crisis that awaited his decision, by the general acknowledgment of his power, implied by the hopes of the one side and the fears of the other; and he could not fail to perceive that, while by yielding to the entreaties of his own subjects, of the French people, and of the head of the Church, he appeared in the light of a great and magnanimous prince sacrificing his private feelings to the public good; on the other hand, if he rejected this appeal, he might hereafter lose his present position as the umpire of the war, and be made to feel its calamitous effects.

The peace thus ardently longed for was secured by the treaty of Arras, in 1435. This instrument exhibits in a strong light the unequal terms on which a feudal sovereign was sometimes compelled to treat with his powerful vassals. It consists of a series of concessions and engagements on the part of Charles, which the Duke of Burgundy is graciously pleased to accept—moved thereto, as he states, by compassion for the suffering people of the realm, and by the request and summons of the holy father and the ecumenical council assembled at Basel. By one provision of the treaty,—the only one that requires notice as bearing on events to be hereafter related,—the king ceded to Philip the towns and seigneuries lying on both banks of the Somme, embracing the greater part of Picardy, subject to the usual restrictions of a feudal grant, and to a stipulation—inserted probably to save the honour of the crown—that these

places might hereafter be redeemed by the payment of four hundred thousand gold crowns.[42]

Several years elapsed after the Duke of Burgundy had withdrawn from their support before the English could be induced to consent to a suspension of hostilities; and, although the truce made in 1444 was renewed from time to time, it was not until their means were crippled and their energies exhausted by the civil wars of Lancaster and York that they finally desisted from their efforts to re-establish their dominion in France.

It remains only to say a few words respecting the condition of that country when the clouds which had settled over it began at length to clear away. Far from subsiding, the waters seemed to rise higher as the violence of the storm abated. The foreign enemy had been vanquished; the two great parties had laid aside their animosity; but in order that tranquillity might be restored, that industry might again flourish, it was necessary that the very army which had achieved these successes should be conquered and subdued. As it turned from the pursuit of the retreating foe, it broke up into bands, that spread themselves over the impoverished country, gleaning the scattered spoils which remained from the harvest of their onward march. Passing from province to province, they established their head-quarters in the castles and small fortresses, sallying forth in quest of booty, extorting ransom from their prisoners, and

[42] The treaty—since known as the "first treaty of Arras," to distinguish it from that by which, in 1483, the towns of the Somme were finally restored to France—is given at length by Lamarche (ed. Petitot), tom. i., p. 254 et seq., and may also be found, with the confirmation by the Council of Basel and other documents relating to the subject, in Dumont, Corps Diplomatique, tom. ii., pp. 309 et seq.

exciting by their marvellous rapacity—their keenness of scent, dexterity of finger, and ingenious methods of appropriation and compulsion—the admiration of their victims, who, with wit inspired by terror, bestowed upon them the names of the *Écorcheurs* (fleecers) and *Retondeurs* (shearers)—names long preserved in the popular recollection. Even the walled towns and cities were menaced with attack; and the inhabitants were generally glad to compound for the hazards of an assault by the payment of a heavy fine.

But, happily, though anarchy still prevailed in the country, it no longer existed in the government. The machine was once more in motion; and a clear-sighted and vigorous policy, which marked the rise of a new order of statesmen, directed its operation. Schemes of reform were not merely devised, but carried into execution; laws were not merely promulgated, but enforced. The natural channels of revenue were reopened, and the expenses of the state placed upon an equitable basis. By an ordinance celebrated as the first of the kind in modern history, the feudal levies that had taken part in the war were converted into a standing army, with regular pay, and under officers appointed by the king. To defray the expense of this establishment, a direct and perpetual tax, of fixed annual amount, was imposed by the sole authority of the crown; and the innovation, though it excited the clamours of a few, was submitted to without demur by the body of the nation, who recognised its necessity.[43] By another ordinance the towns

[43] "Le Roy Charles . . . fut advisé . . . que le peuple aymeroit mieux payer icelle taille par an (qui toutesfois estoit grande et de pesant faix et charge) que ce qu'ils fussent journellement mangés et pillés." Lamarche, tom. i., p. 406.

were required to raise, equip, and furnish when needed for the royal service, a body of archers proportioned to the number of the inhabitants. Such of the brigand-soldiery as refused to submit to the new organization were treated as public enemies. These measures did not indeed go into effect without encountering resistance from the great nobles. The establishment of a permanent military force was inveighed against as an arbitrary innovation and a stepping-stone to tyranny.[44] Feudalism, alarmed at the approaching strides of this new power, whose hostile intentions could not be mistaken, put itself in an attitude of defence. But the time had not yet come for the final trial of strength between the two systems. The nobility had been greatly weakened by the bloody struggle through which it had just passed, and the activity of the government allowed its enemies no time for concentration. The rebellion was suppressed without difficulty. Charles the Seventh travelled through his dominions, accompanied not only by his slender court, but by his artillery, his gendarmes, and his provost-marshals, battering the strongholds of refractory chiefs, and hunting down the *Écorcheurs* with merciless rigour. When a gallows was not at hand,

[44] That Basin, after showing the necessity for these measures and acknowledging their efficacy, should pronounce an invective against their authors, pretending that the system of feudal levies offered sufficient means for the protection of the country, and branching out into a declamatory harangue on the overthrow of popular liberty (meaning thereby feudal anarchy), and the evils of despotism, illustrated by references to ancient history, is matter of amusement rather than surprise. That Sismondi and some other modern writers should have fallen into a similar tone is an evidence of the arbitrary power of mere words and commonplace phrases over the thoughts and opinions of even penetrating minds.—See some remarks on the first formation of standing armies, and its supposed connection with the establishment of despotic governments, postea, Book III. chap. 3.

they were strung up to the branches of the trees, or tied in sacks and thrown into the rivers. In this rude, ambulatory way the "king's justice" once more showed its stern presence in the land.[45] The timid merchant ventured back to the ancient routes. The hoarded coin, more deeply buried, more jealously secreted, than the original ore in nature's hiding-places, came freely into circulation. The peasants crept from their dank and gloomy lairs, and looked around for their ruined dwellings and wasted fields.[46]

In that part of the country which had been the chief theatre of the English war the return of peace was hailed with a peculiar joy. The effect was like that of the south-west wind so impatiently expected by the ice-bound voyagers in Arctic climes, which, when it comes, dissolves in a single night the obstructions to their progress or return. For nearly thirty years the inhabitants of the north of France, cooped up in the walled towns, had endured the perils, the privations, and the anxieties

[45] Olivier de Lamarche bears striking testimony to the zeal and industry with which this needful work was prosecuted: "Certifie que la riviere de Sosne et le Doux estoyent si pleins de corps et de charongnes d'iceux escorcheurs, que maintesfois les pescheurs les tiroyent en lieu de poisson, deux à deux, trois à trois corps, liés et accouplés de cordes ensemble." Mémoires, tom. i., p. 291. Sometimes the sack bore on the outside the significant inscription, "Laissez passer la justice du Roi!" At least, an instance — of earlier date, however — is mentioned by Lefevre de Saint-Remy (ed. Buchon), tom. i., p. 52.

[46] "Tum publica itinera, absque rerum et corporum discrimine, frequentare videres; tum omne hominum genus, potissime negociatores, crumenas auro refertas, quod paulo ante in secretis naturæ visceribus, prædonum metu, recondebant, tutissimum palam deferre et de una in alteram patriam proficisci lætantur." Blondel, *Assertio Normanniæ*, cited by Quicherat in his edition of Basin, tom. i., p. 173, note. Lamarche speaks of the new military organization as "belle et profitable chose pour le Royaume; et par ce moyen cesseront les Escorcheurs et les gens de compaignies leur courses et leur pilleries." Mémoires, tom. i., p. 407.

of a continuous siege. In the chronicles of the time there is no picture more touching than that of the manner in which these poor captives welcomed the announcement of their deliverance. Hastening first to the churches and the shrines of the saints, they poured forth the emotions of gratitude with which in that long looked-for, long despaired-of hour every heart was full. Many of them set out at once upon distant pilgrimages, in fulfilment of vows made during their season of trial. But the common impulse was that of the bird escaped from his cage into the freedom and the air of his native woods. The streets were thronged with young and old, of both sexes and of all conditions, who, as soon as the gates were opened, streamed forth in all directions, eager to behold the sights and scenes which some remembered vaguely as visions of their childhood, and others had never visited or gazed upon before. The meadows, the running brooks, the sylvan glades, even the wild and desolate features of the landscape, were sources of wonder and of exquisite delight.[47] Yet with these grateful sensations of novelty and new-gained freedom were mingled feelings of a different cast. Gray-haired men were seen seeking for the sites of their former dwellings, and striving to identify the spots associated in their memory with the cares, the joys, the sacred sorrows, of a distant past.[48] Little remained to assist their recollections or to aid them in

[47] "Juvabat et silvas videre, et agros, licet ubique pæne squalentes et desertos, virentia prata, fontesque atque amnes, et aquarum rivulos intueri; de quibus quidem a multis, qui urbium claustra nunquam exierant, fama dumtaxat, experimento vero nulla notitia habebatur." Basin, tom i., p. 165.

[48] Lamarche, Mémoires.

the search. The ashes of their ruined homes had long since disappeared. The fields they had once tilled were now covered with woods. Even the highways were no longer discernible.[49] The traces of earlier habitation and of later destruction seemed alike obliterated. Nature, stern and solitary, reigned over a region which centuries before had been rescued from her sway by the energies of man, but which, forfeited by his follies and his crimes, had again become subject to her claim.

[49] Basin, tom. i., p. 118.

CHAPTER II.

DOMINIONS, COURT, AND POLICY OF PHILIP THE GOOD.

THE existing territorial divisions of France, though not altogether arbitrary in their arrangement and nomenclature, do not, like those which they have superseded in the maps and official records, represent the broader diversities in the geography of the country, or those distinctions of origin, habits, dialect, and history which constitute what may be termed the *etymology* of the nation.

The names, therefore, of the ancient provinces, connected with so many familiar associations in the present and in the past, are not likely ever to fall entirely into disuse. That of BURGUNDY calls up a picture of smiling vineyards, sheltered hill-sides where a climate and a soil peculiarly adapted to this species of culture give a golden beauty to the vintage.[1] It carries the imagination back to what was most imposing in the manners and institutions of the Middle Ages—to rich abbeys and lordly castles, to scenes of festive pomp and brilliant feats of arms. It suggests recollections of the most fascinating pages in the literature of France — the vinous fecundity of sentiment and easy copiousness of expression that characterise such writers, dissimilar in

[1] The *Côte d'Or* is usually supposed to have derived its name from the great luxuriance of its vines and the value of their yield. The name may possibly, however, have had some connection with the lustre and rich colour of the wine and of the grapes. There is a costly species of Burgundian wine which is called, from its golden hue, *gouttes d'or*.

all other respects, as Bossuet, Buffon, and Lamartine.[2]

Few provinces are still so rich in the traces and memorials of an illustrious past. The cities, small but stately, adorned with many fountains and spacious public walks, have an air of faded splendour, suggestive not of any former state of commercial activity[3] or the vulgar opulence of a prosperous burgher life, but of the assemblings of princes, statesmen, soldiers, and ecclesiastics—of the pride and magnificence of martial courts. The buildings and antiquities are of many races and various epochs—relics of the mysterious Druidic worship, temples and statues of the old Roman gods, and Christian churches in the purest styles of Gothic architecture. Amidst the granitic fastnesses of the mountain range that intersects the country the Gauls are supposed to have made their last stand against the conquering legions of Cæsar, losing in a single battle more than eighty thousand men. During the Middle Ages the soil was the property of a numerous and powerful nobility — whose ruined castles still lie scattered amongst the hills—and of great religious communities, famous beyond all others in the west of Europe: among them Cluny, the most renowned of

[2] Burgundy has been always pre-eminent among the French provinces for the number and fame of its men of letters, and especially of its orators. It owed its early distinction in this, as in some other respects, to the influence of the Benedictines. Voltaire assigned to Dijon the rank of the second town in France in respect to literary activity.

A compatriot and friend of Lamartine made use, in the writer's hearing, of a truly Burgundian metaphor to describe the exuberance of the poet's genius: "He has only to open the *tap*, and the poetry runs of itself."

[3] At Dijon, the workshops and dwellings of the artisans were outside the walls, and the streets in the suburbs were called by the names of the different trades. Courtépée, tom. ii., p. 53.

the Benedictine convents; Citeaux, the head of the great Carthusian order, and the parent establishment of more than three thousand religious houses; Clairvaux, founded by Bernard, the most illustrious of Burgundians, and the most eminent among the fathers of the Gallican church; and Vezelay, now a ruin in the midst of a rocky solitude, but once the largest and most magnificent of monasteries, where the same great orator and saint aroused by his impassioned eloquence the drooping spirit of the Crusades.[4]

There is little in the present condition of the country to dissipate the impression made by the remains that attest its former greatness. The animation of chivalry, the gaieties and ceremonies of a picturesque age, have vanished; but their place is not supplied by the industrial activity or the experimental and inventive spirit of the nineteenth century. Burgundy is unsuited by its situation to become the seat of an extensive commerce. Nor does the culture of the vine, requiring a simple though careful husbandry, call for the aid of science, or give a stimulus to other branches of industry. It has occasioned, where the soil is fruitful, an excessive subdivision of landed property, with a consequent deterioration in the quality and relative value of the pro-

[4] Courtépée, passim. — Hist. de Bourgogne, tom. i., pp. 147-152, 302, 304, et al. — Helyot, Dict. des Ordres Religieux. — Lavergne, Mém. sur l'Économie rurale de la France (Séances et Travaux de l'Acad. des Sciences morales et politiques, Avril, 1856).

It is scarcely necessary to draw the reader's notice to the fact, not exemplified in Burgundy alone, that the situations most favourable to the culture of the grape were also found especially suited to the growth of monastic establishments. Many of the most noted vineyards of Europe still bear the names of the genial fraternities by whom they were first planted. The truth is, that the monks were the "model farmers" of the Middle Ages, often the earliest pioneers in clearing the soil, always the most skilful and intelligent in developing its resources.

ductions, as well as an overplus in the number and an absence of any improvement in the condition of the cultivators.[5] In other parts of the province, a large portion of the surface is left wild and uncultivated; many tracts once occupied have been deserted; and that gradual diminution of the rural population which has of late become noticeable throughout France seems here to have been a subject of anxiety and complaint during the last two centuries.[6]

Franche-Comté, or the Free County of Burgundy—the country of the ancient Sequani—had been the original seat of the Burgundian power in Gaul, and the nucleus of that kingdom the history and extent of which were briefly noticed at the beginning of the last

[5] Arthur Young founds his strongest arguments against *la petite culture* on the condition of the wine-growing districts. See, in particular, the interesting and striking remarks in his Travels in France, vol. ii., pp. 221-223. The enormous product, in favourable years, from a very small portion of ground, and the fact that no great outlay of capital, or any other than manual labour, is required, while, on the other hand, constant care and close attention are indispensable, for the successful cultivation of the vine, are the causes of that minute division of the land with which it is so often found connected. These circumstances, however, would render it in fact peculiarly adapted to "peasant properties," but for the extreme uncertainty of the crop, frequently resulting in a total loss, and in the consequent destitution of the small proprietors. M. de Lavergne writes, in 1856, "Malheureusement, depuis quelques années, les intempéries ont fait disparaître à peu près la récolte. . . . Il n'y a presque pas d'industrie dans l'Yonne; la Côte d'Or en a davantage, mais pas assez pour donner un grand essor à la production rurale. La moitié du pays n'est qu'une solitude; dans l'autre règnent la petite propriété et la petite culture." Économie rurale de la France.

[6] Vauban, the great military engineer, himself a native of Burgundy, wrote a paper on this subject, which he presented to the government of Louis XIV. Courtépée, in the eighteenth century, makes the same complaints. M. de Lavergne, who mentions the paper of Vauban, draws a similar picture of the present state of things; and his statements seem to be confirmed by the statistical returns more recently published. Yet the very continuance during so long a period of this asserted decline might lead one to suspect some error or exaggeration.

chapter. After a long separation from the duchy of Burgundy, it again became subject to the same rule in the early part of the fourteenth century. It was a fief, however, not of France, but of the Empire, though situated within the natural boundaries of France, governed by a line of princes of French descent, and inhabited by a people who spoke the French language. On the death of Philip de Rouvres, it passed to his widow, Margaret of Flanders, and formed part of the magnificent dowry which that princess brought to her second husband, Philip the Bold of Burgundy. Subsequently to the period of this history it was united to the dominions of the house of Austria, and remained in their possession till conquered and annexed to France by Louis the Fourteenth in the latter part of the seventeenth century.

Bordered by the duchy on the west, and on the east and south by Switzerland, it presents a gradually ascending surface, that reaches its highest point in the summits of the Jura. This variety of elevation occasions a corresponding diversity of climate and productions. On the lower slopes, maize, and even the vine, are cultivated with success; but the more mountainous portions, for the most part wood and pasture lands, offer the thousand aspects of Alpine scenery, by turns lovely and sublime, and wanting only the "eternal glaciers" to complete the resemblance.[7]

Nor is the resemblance confined to the appearance of the country; it extends also to the character and the occupations of the people. If in the duchy of Burgundy the mingled gaiety and sentiment peculiar to the Gallic

[7] Lavergne, Économie rurale de la France. — Gollut, Mémoires historiques de la République Séquanoise (ed. Duvernoy, Arbois, 1846), liv. ii.

race, the love of public shows and festive meetings, the taste for ornate and pathetic eloquence and poetry, are more conspicuous than elsewhere, Franche-Comté, on the other hand, is the home of a sedate and serious people, accustomed to reflection and to solitude. Its distinguished men have been jurists, statesmen, philosophers, and critics.[8] The peasantry, noted for intelligence, industry, and thrift, devote the long evenings of the winter months to reading and other sedentary pursuits. Nowhere has the division of the soil into small properties been attended with happier effects than here. The want of large capital in single hands is supplied by the principle of association. Each village is a little republic, where the common interests are the object of a sedulous and methodical administration. The great dairies for which the country is famous are managed in the same manner. The owner of a single acre or a single cow shares the same advantages as his wealthier neighbours. The eye of the traveller is everywhere attracted not merely by the charms of the landscape, but by the evidences of a simple prosperity equally diffused and rationally enjoyed. In the spring, when the snow has begun to melt, the cattle are seen ascending in long files to the spare but aromatic pastures of

[8] Among the distinguished natives of Franche-Comté, one of the latest, Cuvier, has perhaps acquired the widest fame. But readers of Robertson and of Prescott will recall with interest the names of the two Granvelles — the able and astute ministers of Charles V. and Philip II. A writer in the Mémoires de l'Institut (Académie des Inscriptions, tom. ix. and xii.) remarks that the *Franche-Comtois* is to the Burgundian what reason is to the imagination. "Il est franc, intelligent, assez gai, hospitable, naturellement bon; d'ailleurs trop homme d'ordre, trop économe, trop égoiste même, pour ne point raisonner ses rares mouvements de générosité." He is described also as a born mathematician, and as possessing a natural aptitude for every branch of science. No other province sends yearly so large a number of pupils to the Polytechnique.

the mountain crevices, where they pass both day and night in the open air, dispersing at the approach of winter, and returning to the valleys and their accustomed shelter.[9]

In comparing the present with the past condition of these provinces, it is hardly necessary to remind the reader of the changes that have taken place in their political and social institutions. At the period to which our history relates, feudalism still overshadowed the soil in nearly every part of Europe. Nowhere had this system, which gave a military form to the whole structure of society and made every other pursuit subordinate to that of arms, struck deeper roots than in Burgundy, a frontier land, and the habitation from the earliest ages of a warlike race, where every rock had its castle and every town was a fortress.[10] "Our Burgundy," says an old writer, "is not wealthy; it has no large revenues; it has nothing to tempt attack, and it is admirably provided with the means of defence; it is trenched by rivers and morasses, scarped by rocks and mountains, and peopled by men fit for war, obstinate in combat, resolute to the death."[11] Its sovereigns in the

[9] These meagre details have been almost wholly borrowed from the excellent and graphic sketch of M. de Lavergne. But the elaborate description of Gollut,—by far the most valuable and interesting portion of his work,—though not compressible into a few sentences, is pervaded with a charm rarely found in the writings of later topographers.

[10] The usual derivation of *Burgundy* and *Burgundian* from *burg*, *bourg*, or *burgus*, a castle or fortified place (or from *berg*, a hill), and *wohner*, or *houde*, "dwellers," or "keepers," though shaken by the arguments of some modern writers, will scarcely be exchanged for any of the etymologies which they have proposed to substitute. Augustin Thierry prefers *Buhr-Gunden*, which he translates "hommes de guerre confédérés." M. de Belloguet contends for *Borgundar* (from *Bor* and *kundar*), "enfants de Bor," or "fils du Vent," which has at least the merit of supporting his theory of a Scandinavian admixture.

[11] "Nostre Bourgogne est en cette condition, car elle n'est riche; elle

fifteenth century accounted for the slender subsidies which they obtained from it by its having shared in the calamities that had befallen France. But, if it did not furnish them with money, it supplied them with a splendid cavalry amounting to a third of the whole number of their troops.[12]

In the NETHERLANDS, the house of Burgundy had gradually extended its sway over eleven provinces,—some of them German fiefs, and others French,—comprising the present kingdoms of Holland and Belgium, with the exception of Gueldres, Friesland, and the principality of Liége, and including, on the west, territory that has since been added to that of France.[13] With the general features of the country the reader may be supposed to be familiar, since no part of Europe has

n'est de grand reuenu; elle ne pouroit r'embourser les frais qu'un veinqueur feroit sur sa conqueste; elle est fornie admirablement de difficultés propres à sa deffense; elle est entrecoupée et comme retranchée de riuiéres et forestz, armée de rochers et montagnes, asseurée de destroitz ou marescages, fornie très populeusement d'hommes bons à la guerre, opiniastres au combat, resolus à la mort." Gollut, col. 121.

[12] Gachard, Documents inédits concernant l'Histoire de Belgique, tom. i., p. 220. And see Dunod, Hist. du Comté de Bourgogne (Dijon, 1737), tom. ii., p. 37, et al.

[13] The provinces were acquired in the following order: Philip the Bold inherited the counties of Flanders and Artois, on the death of Louis van Male, in 1384. His second son, Antony, became Duke of Brabant and Limbourg in 1406; and on the failure of lineal descendants from that prince in 1430, both duchies were adjudged, though not without controversy, to his nephew, Philip the Good, who had already acquired Namur, by purchase, in 1421. The events which enabled Philip to make himself master of the rich inheritance of Jacqueline of Bavaria—the counties of Hainault, Holland, and Zealand—form one of the most striking episodes in the history of the fifteenth century. His sovereignty over these three provinces dated from 1436. Finally, having been constituted the protector of Luxembourg, the possession of his aunt, Elizabeth of Gorlitz, he was recognized as her successor by the estates of that duchy in 1462. The margraviate of Antwerp and the seigneury of Malines (Mechlin) were *enclaves* of Brabant, and had been transferred at the same period and in the same manner.

been more fully or more frequently described. In the middle of the fifteenth century the traveller who, after traversing France, crossed the frontiers of Flanders,—the wealthiest and most important of the provinces,—compared himself to the Israelites when they had quitted the Desert and entered the borders of the Promised Land.[14] Behind him was a country thinly peopled, almost destitute of trade, and wearing a general aspect of poverty and desolation; while before him lay a vast level tract, crowded with cities, swarming with population, teeming with wealth, alive with the industry and energy of men who had created the very soil on which they dwelt, and who seemed to have monopolized the commerce and manufactures of the world.[15]

There can be no doubt that, in the provinces which now constitute the kingdom of Belgium, the cities, with scarcely an exception, have declined in population and importance since the close of the sixteenth century. Even if history were silent on this point, the present aspect of these towns would afford sufficient evidence of the changes which they have undergone. But it is a mistake to suppose that previously to that period the rural districts had attained a degree of prosperity proportional to that of the towns—that the country was

[14] "Se povoient mieulx dire terres de promission que nulles aultres seigneuries qui fussent sur la terre." Commines (ed. Dupont), tom. i., p. 19.

[15] This contrast was drawn by Louis XI. in his reply to a petition presented to him by the inhabitants of Rheims, soon after his accession: "Se quinquennio prope in terris mansisse Burgundionum ducis, in quibus tam magnificæ civitates et oppida tam opulenta . . . populique tanta libertate gaudentes, tam honestis vestibus amicti et culti politique forent, ut felicitatis atque libertatis quoddam specimen cuncta quæ illic viderentur, prætenderent; . . . e diverso vero, cum primum regnum ingressus esset, ubique ruinas et dirutas macerias invenisse, squalentes vero agros atque incultos, velut desertum quoddam," &c. Basin, tom. ii., p. 11.

better cultivated and more productive than almost any other part of Europe—that it presented the same appearance of minute and garden-like husbandry by which it is at present distinguished. These statements—frequently met with—are the result, in part of an erroneous impression produced by the vague eulogies of early writers, which seem descriptive of a state of things such as actually exists, and in part of an unfounded theory, which assumes a necessary connection between the commercial and the agricultural prosperity of a country, or, in other words, takes for granted an increased productiveness in every region where the demand has increased.[16]

It is with reference especially to the present Belgian

[16] Thus we are told in M'Culloch's Geographical Dictionary (art. Belgium) that "Flanders, *in consequence of its great commercial prosperity*, was remarkable for the advanced state of its agriculture long before improvement in this important art was observable north of the Alps and Pyrenees. . . . The necessity of providing for constantly increasing numbers of inhabitants produced the agricultural perfection for which Flanders has long been renowned. . . . The commerce and agriculture of Flanders grew together; and, in order to account for the remarkable excellence of the Flemish husbandry, which has been celebrated for upwards of six hundred years, it is necessary to keep in view the close connection which in that country exists between the farmer, the manufacturer, and the merchant." Were this idea correct,—were the agriculture of Flanders thus dependent on its trade,—the condition of the rural districts would have sympathized with that of the towns, and, instead of constantly and rapidly advancing during the last three centuries, would have exhibited a corresponding decline. The writer goes on to remark, most truly and most pertinently, that "were the whole of Flanders laid out in large farms, and a third or fourth part fallowed every year, or a half left in natural grass, the population could not be fed; and instead of exporting agricultural produce, as at present, a great importation would be requisite to supply the demand of internal consumption." Now this hypothetical case, if somewhat more strongly stated, would be an accurate description of what was really the condition of the most fertile and flourishing district in Flanders during the period when the towns were at the height of their prosperity, and when the excellence of the Flemish husbandry is supposed to have been already renowned.

provinces of East and West Flanders[17] that such assertions are made. It was there that the towns were most numerous, and that commerce and manufactures attained their highest state; it is there that the familiar examples are now furnished of an elaborate culture and surpassing productiveness; and the present and the past unite to produce an illusion, which will be dissipated by a closer examination. For the high condition of Flemish agriculture and the density of the rural population can be shown to be the effects of changes which have taken place within the last three centuries; and the opposite notion is contradicted by facts furnished by the very writers from whose general phrases it has been derived.

[17] Some of the misconceptions relative to the topic under discussion may be attributed to ignorance or forgetfulness of the changes which have taken place in the limits and divisions of Flanders (a point seldom elucidated in general histories), as well as to the practice, formerly so common, of applying this name to the whole of the Belgian provinces. In the Middle Ages Flanders was politically divided into two provinces — the county, a French fief, comprehending the district west and south of the Scheldt, and the *seigneurie*, or lordship, a small tract on the borders of Brabant, which was held of the Empire. But the more popular division was that of Teutonic Flanders (*Flandria Teutonica*, *Flandre flamengant*) and French Flanders (*Flandre gallicant*). Both the present Belgian provinces of East and West Flanders were embraced in Teutonic Flanders, or Flanders Proper, which contained, in the sixteenth century, seventeen walled towns—among them Ghent, Bruges, Ypres, Courtray, &c.—and twenty-three "privileged" or incorporated towns not enclosed by walls, besides a great number of villages. French Flanders—so called not only because French was the common language of the inhabitants, but because this territory had more than once been seized and annexed to their domain by the monarchs of France, though it was not till a far later period that they succeeded in obtaining permanent possession of it—contained but four incorporated towns, of which Lille was the only one comparable for the amount and value of its manufactures with those of Teutonic Flanders. It was to this small district, forming at present no part of Flanders or of Belgium, that, as we shall presently see, the commendations sometimes bestowed by early writers on the Flemish agriculture were intended to apply. The best account of the former extent and boundaries of Flanders may be found in Oudegherst, Annales de Flandre (ed. Lesbroussart, 2 vols. 8vo., Gand), tom. ii., cap. 169.

The soil is for the most part naturally poor, or even absolutely sterile. Much of it was originally submerged. Those regions which yield the largest crops were formerly marshes or sandy wastes. They have been brought into their present state by the most laborious and long-continued efforts, by works of drainage on the largest scale, and the constant application of powerful fertilizers. In these provinces agriculture had made but little progress in the fifteenth, or even in the sixteenth, century. It was an important branch of industry only in that small portion of Flanders which now lies within the confines of France; and even here the wealth of the inhabitants consisted chiefly in herds of cattle, raised on extensive natural pastures which have since almost wholly disappeared. Wheat, now the principal crop, was grown only in the same district, and not in sufficient quantity for home consumption. It was largely imported from Artois and the neighbouring French provinces, from England, Spain, Denmark, and the shores of the Baltic;[18] while the exportation from the Nether-

[18] "Et multis in locis pascuis Flandria ac pratis quam arvo melior est, quo fit ut peregrino necesse habeat uti frumento. Hoc vicinæ gentes .... affatim suppeditant, *ubertate agri longe nobis feliciores.*" Rerum Flandricarum Tomi X., auctore Jacobo Meyero Balliolano (Brugis, 1842), p. 77.—Glanville, an English monk, who wrote about the middle of the fourteenth century, describes Flanders as "terra pascuis uberrima et pecudibus plena." Reiffenberg, Commerce des Pays bas aux XV et XVI siècles (Mém. Couronnées de l'Acad. de Bruxelles, tom. i., p. 20).—"Solum . . . sationi et agriculturæ in genere quidem satis idoneum, ac *mediocriter fertile*," says Guicciardini — a description which would be thought strangely inapplicable at the present day. He goes on, however, "Alibi vero et præsertim versus maritima Galliamque" (the neighbourhood of Dixmude and the French département du Nord), "raræ cujusdam fecunditatis." But he particularises only the richness of the pastures and the number and size of the cattle. Belgicæ, sive Inferioris Germaniæ, Descriptio (12mo., Amstelodami, 1652), p. 332. Elsewhere he characterises French Flanders as "regio parum ampla, bona tamen et pulchra," and speaks of the soil as

lands of grain or agricultural produce of any description was strictly prohibited by the laws.[19] A great portion of the surface—including the Pays de Waes and other districts now the most fertile and highly cultivated in the country, presenting the appearance of a vast garden whence every stone and weed are carefully removed—was at the period of our history entirely barren; the road from Dendermonde, except where it passed through towns and villages, traversed plains of sand and uninhabitable bogs that extended to the walls of Bruges; and it was not till about the year 1530 that the first attempts were made to reclaim and cultivate the soil even in the vicinity of the principal cities.[20]

"tritici maxime feracissimum." Yet we know from other sources that even here the quantity produced was insufficient for the wants of the inhabitants; and Guicciardini himself adds, "Pascua ejus uberrima, ideoque uberrimus etiam quæstus ex pecudum gregibus" (p. 402).

A more remarkable passage is to be found in an exceedingly rare work of the Spanish writer Calvete de la Estrella: "La tierra [in Flanders generally] por la multitud de la gente, que tiene, *no es muy fertil de pan*, principalmente de trigo, antes por la mayor parte es llena de florestas, de prados, de pastos, y bosques, lagos, estaques y rios, que aunque sean pequeños, son los mas d'ellos navegables, porque en inuierno no seria posible yr por mucha parte d'ella á cavallo, ni á pie, ni en carros, sino fuese por los tales rios y fosos hechos a mano." (Viaje del Principe Don Phelipe, Amvercs, 1552, fol. 95, verso.) Here we see that Flanders, in the sixteenth century, was still *in process of making*, its condition being similar to that of Holland in the seventeenth century, where the "quaking ground," the "daily deluge," and the "people dwelling in ships," afforded a fruitful theme for satire to the writers of neighbouring nations.

In both French and Belgian Flanders great numbers of cattle are now raised, but they are chiefly stall-fed; and, while in England three-fourths of the soil are appropriated to the raising of animals, in the département du Nord, where they are proportionally more numerous, though inferior in breed, the products of one quarter of the surface suffice for this purpose. Lavergne, Économie rurale de la France (Séances et Travaux de l'Acad. des Sciences morales et politiques, tom. xv., p. 137). The superiority of the English cattle was acknowledged even in the sixteenth century.

[19] "Triticum insuper, secale, et quidquid præterea frugum est, exportare hinc nefas." Guicciardini, p. 79.

[20] Des böhmischen Herrn Leos von Rozmital Ritter-, Hof-, und Pilger-

In such a region agriculture could flourish only under favourable circumstances and the operation of a peculiar stimulus. But during the Middle Ages all the circumstances were unfavourable, and conspired to produce the opposite result. The land, as elsewhere in Europe, was subject to the burdens and monopolies of the feudal system. It was cultivated chiefly by a servile class, or by a class whose condition was but little removed from

Reise durch die Abenlande 1465–1467, beschrieben von zweinen seiner Begleiter (8vo., Stuttgart, 1844).—"Nonnullisque in locis, agro præcipue Brugensi ac Gandensio tantum non sterili, ubi tamen nunc vincere quidam nituntur soli maliciam, terramque hactenus incultam et arenosam in arva redigere." Meyer, Rerum Flandricarum Tomi X., p. 78.—Even Guicciardini, writing in the latter half of the sixteenth century, and always inclined to exalt and amplify the resources of the Netherlands, speaks of the soil in Teutonic Flanders as "magna ex parte exuccum et sabulosum, sic ut tritici parum ferax sit" (p. 336). He adds that some other kinds of grain, buckwheat and rye, were produced in abundance, which may be considered as confirmatory of the earlier statement of Meyer, that this region was, when he wrote, only beginning to be cultivated. Calvete de la Estrella says, somewhat contemptuously, "En la parte Oriental [Teutonic Flanders] lo mas que se coge es centeno." Wheat was grown, at least in any considerable amount, only in that portion of Belgium which is now included in the dominions of France. Artois supplied the markets of Brussels, Malines, &c. (Guicciardini, p. 436, et al.) According to the Venetian envoy, Frederico Badoero, a greater quantity of grain was raised in Artois than in all the other provinces together. (Relazioni degli Ambasciatori Veneti, Serie I., vol. iii., p. 280.) So also Calvete de la Estrella: "En la Occidental [French Flanders] se coge trigo, y bueno, y *no tanto que baste para sustentarse los pueblos.* Proveense de Artoes, de Francia, de Dinamarca, Alemaña, y otros partes" (fol. 95 verso). Wild game of all kinds was exceedingly plentiful. (Idem, fol. 95 recto, and Guicciardini, p. 332.) We meet with no mention of villas and "pleasure-houses" owned by the wealthier inhabitants of the towns, and embellished with gardens and lawns. Had the custom, now almost universal amongst this class of the population, of occupying rural residences during a portion of the year, been commonly practised, it would hardly have escaped mention by Italian writers. The citizens of Brussels, as appears from Guicciardini (p. 44), combined the observance of a religious duty with the gratification of their taste by spending a few weeks in summer "in retreat" at one or other of the monastic houses scattered through the Forest of Soignies, "non minore devotione quam animi sui solatio."

that of servitude. On the other hand, the situation of the Netherlands offered peculiar advantages for other pursuits, which, if not altogether free, were subject at least to no degrading conditions, and which tended, therefore, to absorb the capital and industrial energies of the inhabitants.[21] Even the villages so thickly scattered over some parts of the country were in fact embryo towns, where the same branches of industry were carried on as in the larger places.[22] But in the latter half of the sixteenth century, the trade and manufactures of Belgium—partly from the effect of great political convulsions, partly through the competition of still more favoured localities and the rising enterprise

[21] Arthur Young, finding the agriculture "miserable" in the Pays de Caux (in Normandy), states, as the explanation, that it "is a manufacturing country, and farming is but a secondary pursuit to the cotton fabric." Mill (Political Economy, Amer. ed., vol. i., p. 327) remarks that "the same district is still the seat of manufactures . . . and is now . . . one of the best cultivated in France." It is to be remembered, however, that the Pays de Caux possesses a soil of great natural fertility, the best, in fact, in the whole country. The general tendency of an increase of manufactures in a region not greatly favoured in regard to climate and soil is to check the growth of the agricultural population. This takes place not merely by drawing away labour into more profitable employment, which would perhaps be only a temporary result (except in such cases as that of Flanders in the Middle Ages, where a residence in the city offered, besides, social and political enfranchisement), but by creating markets which the home production is inadequate to supply, and by the consequent improvement in the means of communication and other facilities for obtaining supplies from distant and more fertile regions, which are thereby stimulated to increased productiveness. Thus we see that in New England, at the present time, while in the manufacturing towns and their immediate vicinity there is a rapid advance in the population, that of the strictly rural districts is stationary or declining. It is in vain that the orators at county meetings and "fairs" exhort the New England farmer against a change of occupation or removal to the west.

[22] This fact, attested by various passages in the chronicles and documents of the times, is noticed by the Venetian envoy Vincenzo Quirini, whose "relation," one of the earliest yet discovered, bears the date of 1506. "Ne' quali [gli villagi] pur si tessono panni si dalli uomini comme dalle donne, perchè *pochi lavorano terre*." Relazioni Venete, Serie I., vol. i., p. 11.

of England and of Holland—fell into a decay from which they have but recently begun to recover. The towns then discharged their superabundant population, and labour and capital were directed into a new channel. Another, and in this connection a still more important change, has been the removal of all burdensome restrictions on the holding and transfer of landed property. A great portion of the land is now divided into small farms, which are cultivated with an assiduity and ardour only to be found where the labourer is himself the proprietor.

There is probably no part of Europe where, at the present day, the land is more carefully tilled and made to produce a larger amount than in the two Flanders and the plains of Lombardy. In the latter region the soil is one of natural and almost unequalled fertility; that of the former may be described as an artificial soil, created by the skill and industry of the inhabitants, and liable, if their efforts should relax, to return to a state of barrenness. Yet, owing to a preferable system of tenure, rather than to any superiority in the methods or implements employed, the advantage in respect to actual productiveness is on the side of Flanders. But it is certain, from the testimony of two highly intelligent writers—one of them a native of Flanders, the other of Lombardy—that the case was wholly different three centuries ago. Philippe de Commines, who visited Lombardy in 1495, after mentioning that the country, like Flanders, was intersected by numerous ditches and canals (though he fails to notice the distinction in the purposes which these were intended to serve—in the one case chiefly that of draining, in the other that of irrigating the soil), tells us that it far surpassed

Flanders in fruitfulness and the abundance and excellence of its corn and other productions; and he adds the significant fact that the fields were never suffered to lie fallow.[23] On the other hand, the Venetian envoy Michele Soriano, writing in 1559, speaks of the agricultural condition of the Netherlands with extreme contempt. He describes the country as at once the richest and the least productive in the world. "It is unproductive," he says, "in part from the unpropitious character of the climate and the soil, and in part through the fault of the inhabitants, who are devoted to other pursuits, and give little attention to agriculture, leaving the greater portion of the surface covered with pasturage and woods."[24]

[23] "Au descendre de la montaigne, on veit le plain pays de Lombardie, qui est des beaux et bons du monde, et des plus habondans, et combien qu'il se die plain, si est il mal aysé à chevaulcher; car il est tout fossoyé, comme est Flandres, ou encores plus; mais il est bien meilleur et plus fertille, tant en bons formens que en bons vins et fruictz, et ne sejournent jamais leurs terres." (Commines, tom. ii., p. 459.) —It is worthy of mention that the same historian, though born in that part of Flanders where the chief advance had then been made in the cultivation of the soil, while he frequently eulogises the commerce and riches of his native province, has nothing to say in praise of its agriculture. This silence is the more significant, since he pronounces the country around Paris the most fertile and best tilled which he had ever seen, and tells us of the unbounded astonishment with which, during his twenty months' imprisonment in one of the lofty towers of the royal palace, he had watched from his windows the transport down the Seine of the immense quantities of provisions brought to the capital from the adjacent parts of Normandy. Mémoires, tom. i., p. 74, and Mdlle. Dupont's "Notice" prefixed, pp. cv. cvi.

[24] "Non è al mondo alcun altro paese che sia insieme più sterile e più ricco. E più sterile parte per natura, e per il cielo, ch' è freddo ed umido, parte per poca cura degli uomini, li quali attendono più alla mercanzia e all' altre arti, che all' agricoltura, lasciando andare il paese a pascoli e a boschi, come fanno anco gl' Inglesi il loro." (Relazioni Venete, Serie I., vol. iii., p. 355.)—So also Quirini tells us that agriculture was neglected because there was little land to cultivate (*i.e.* little that would have repaid the labour of cultivating it), and because the inhabitants were otherwise employed. "Yet," he adds, "there is an abundance of all things;" and Badoero assigns the reason of this abundance—

Yet no one—as we learn from the same authority as well as from a multitude of others—could doubt the incomparable prosperity of the Netherlands, after witnessing the activity of their commerce, which supplied them with all the products of the earth,[25] and the number, size, and continual bustle of their towns. Italy itself, indeed, could boast of no district that contained in the same compass as Flanders so many places, large and small, with so dense and so industrious a population.[26]

"per causa de' mari e de' molti fiumi." Relazioni Venete, Serie I., vol. iii., p. 290.

Macchiavelli, in his "Ritratti di Francia," expresses the opinion that the Netherlands would be utterly unable to sustain a war with France. In this he was mistaken; but the grounds for his assertion were not the less matters of fact. "I Fiamminghi non ricolgono per la fredda natura del paese da vivere, e massime di grani e vini, i quali bisogna che tragghino di Borgogna e di Picardia, e di altri stati di Francia. E dipoi i popoli di Fiandra vivono di opere di mano."

On the whole, it would seem, from the facts and citations here presented, and others which might have been adduced, that the agricultural condition of the Belgian provinces three or four centuries ago bore little resemblance to what it now is, and, instead of being far in advance of that of most other countries at the same era, might in general be considered as backward. Artois, French Flanders, and the western part of Hainault—comprising a territory which now lies wholly within the confines of France—were the only wheat-producing regions; and only the first-mentioned province raised more grain than was required for the wants of its own population. There are grounds for believing that Picardy, Normandy, and some other parts of France, Denmark, and many portions of Germany, to say nothing of the countries south of the Alps and Pyrenees, had reached a more advanced state in this respect. Even England, decidedly in the rear of other countries at that period, was able occasionally to export corn to the Netherlands. In Teutonic Flanders a great portion of the surface was still unreclaimed, and the soil was nowhere considered as fit for wheat, or as more than moderately fertile. North Brabant was in a similar state. With respect to the southern provinces, the chief difference to be noted between the present appearance of the country and that which it presented at the time of which we write, is the far greater area then covered by the natural heath—which still forms a characteristic feature of the landscape—and by the forests, which around Brussels and other towns extended up to the walls.

[25] "È più ricco per il gran traffico che ha con l' Inghilterra, con la Francia, con la Spagna, con la Germania, con l' Italia e con tutto il mondo." Relazione di Soriano.

[26] Comparisons were frequently made between the towns of the Netherlands

The Spanish nobles who, in 1529, visited the province in the train of their prince, afterwards Philip the Second, when they beheld the frequent spires that relieved the flatness of the landscape, exclaimed that "Flanders was all one city." [27]

It is to the first formation of civic communities that History traces the rise of that emulative and progressive spirit which has become the dominant and characteristic passion of civilized man. The country, without the city, can never rise above barbarism; its own life is that of a partially organised being, which has neither heart nor brain. Rural labour is but a silent co-operation with the reproductive powers of nature. But the city glows with the mutual fire of mind brought into collision with mind. There all is in mutation and fermentation. There the products of the earth are mingled, subtilized, shaped into new forms, exchanged, and redistributed. There ideas announce themselves, and in the conflict of thought new energies are developed, new modes of activity devised. If the sensitive spirit of the poet shrinks before the aspect of the crowded capital with its multifarious variety of purpose and pursuit, the soul of the philosopher, rising above the billows of this agitated sea, and recognising the real combination and unity of action that underlie the apparent diversity, exults in the evidence thus afforded of the powers, the resources, and the exalted destiny of his race.[28]

and those of Italy—Bruges or Antwerp being compared with Venice, Louvain with Padua, Brussels with Brescia, Ghent with Verona, &c. See, for example, the Relazione of Marino Cavalli, Relaz. Venete, Serie I., vol. ii., p. 201. The superiority of the Flemish towns in size and commercial importance was conceded by the Italians.

[27] Guicciardini, Belgicæ Descriptio, p. 334.

[28] Heinrich Heine has somewhere a striking train of reflection suggested by the ceaseless throng and din of the greatest of modern capitals, which he closes with the emphatic phrase, "Schicken Sie den Philosoph nach London aber beym Gott keinen

In the cities founded in the Middle Ages, Freedom became the bride of Industry, and brought with her a dower richer than that of queens. Then it was that not only commerce and mechanical skill, but science and art, gained their first triumphs over the barbarism which had effaced the civilization of the ancient world. The patronage of the nobles, who found their condition magically changed—their rude and sombre dwellings transformed into palaces, their life begirt with splendour, their tastes refined and gratified, their broad lands, the source of their dignity and power, become also the source of incalculable wealth—or even that of a Church enriched and lavishly adorned by the same means, can be reckoned as of little account in fostering the new-born spirit of invention and of enterprise, compared with the stimulating influences of a scene where there was a constant interchange of thought between kindred minds, where all efforts and all pursuits were mutually dependent, and every spark of life contributed to the common flame.

The cities of the Netherlands seemed to have been the first and spontaneous products of the soil. What else could it have yielded to repay the labour and the capital expended in reclaiming it—in unlocking the sandy barriers that refused an outlet to the rivers—in constructing the huge ramparts necessary to defend the newly-gained land from the incessant assaults of the

Poet!" What a contrast between Cowper, flying like "a stricken deer from the herd," and proclaiming at once the bitterness of his recollections and the soothing pleasures of his retirement in the exclamation that "God made the country and man made the town," and Samuel Johnson, delighting to gaze upon that "finest of all prospects," the "tide of human life" that poured by Charing-Cross! Yet Cowper's line may suggest a different feeling from that which he intended to express; and most of us, perhaps, are capable of sympathizing on occasion with these opposite moods, at one time rejoicing in the concurrent and complex manifestations of human energy, and at another bewildered by the seeming incoherence, or depressed and overwhelmed by the hurry and tumult

ocean? These were originally the works not of a thinly-scattered agricultural population, but of communities of traders[29] seeking access to the sea, facilities for transportation, an *entrepôt* for their goods—taking possession of the polders, the islets, the marshy capes, and connecting them by dikes and dams, where they built their warehouses and quays, and invited the nations of the world to meet and interchange their commodities.[30] Here, too, the fugitive or emancipated serf was comparatively safe from the tyranny of the feudal lord. No rocky eminences, surmounted by frowning castles, cast their shadows on the rising towns. Each province was, in a political sense, a mere aggregate of cities. The burghers possessed immunities and powers that outweighed those of the secular and ecclesiastical nobility.

of the scene, contrasted with the self-absorption of the actors.

[29] "La faible population de ces campagnes, alors noyées, malsaines, n'eût jamais fait à coup sûr des travaux si longs et si coûteux. Il fallait beaucoup de bras, de grandes avances, surtout pouvoir attendre. Ce ne fut qu'à la longue, lorsque l'industrie eut entassé les hommes et l'argent dans quelques fortes villes, que la population débordante put former des faubourgs, des bourgs, des hameaux, ou changer les hameaux en villes." Michelet, Hist. de France, tom. v., p. 321.

The pretensions of some of the Belgian cities to a great antiquity are neither susceptible of proof nor supported by probabilities. The earliest communal charters date from the eleventh and twelfth centuries. But, whatever the time of their origin, it is certain that their rise was sudden and rapid, and nowise connected with the progress of agriculture. The state of Flanders in the fifteenth century, with its many flourishing towns, separated from each other by dreary wastes, and maintaining communication chiefly by the rivers and canals, is strong evidence on this point. Michelet has noticed the significance of the many names ending in *dyk* and *dam* of towns now far distant from the sea.

[30] Without doubt the Hanseatic League and many foreign trading companies had a large share in developing the resources of the Netherlands. Even in their palmiest days the commerce of Bruges and of Antwerp was altogether in the hands of foreigners, the natives contenting themselves, according to Gasparo Contarini (Relaz. Venete, Serie I., vol. ii., p. 22), with the incomes derived from the rents of their houses and similar sources.

Virtually they became the *first* estate. In other parts of Europe the privileges granted to the communes were either overthrown by despotism or were gradually absorbed in the larger political rights acquired by the mass of the nation. But the history of the Netherlands is a history of free municipal institutions—their early struggles, their complete and permanent triumph. They formed the basis—or, we might rather say, supplied the want—of national unity and a general political system, both in Belgium and in Holland, down to a recent period, having flourished under the imperial sway of Charles the Fifth, and resisted the natural but somewhat clumsy efforts of Philip the Second to establish in their place a more simple and homogeneous system.

It is true that the Flemish towns did not, like those of Lombardy and Tuscany, rise to the position of independent states. But when we reflect on the history of the Italian republics—presenting an exact parallel with that of the ancient Grecian states—when we remember that in them freedom, though it put forth glorious blossoms, bore no substantial and enduring fruit; that it never acquired the character of a legal and heritable possession, to be guarded indeed with vigilance, but to be enjoyed in security; that in every town a class of powerful nobles, who reduced conspiracy to a science, laboured incessantly to undermine its free institutions, which in the fifteenth century were finally and completely overthrown; we shall admit that it was better to be a citizen of Antwerp or of Ghent than of Florence or of Milan.

But although the Flemish cities were not torn by internal dissensions—by an internecine war of classes—their history exhibits many turbulent and bloody scenes.

The people of the Netherlands were a loyal, but not a servile, race.[31] They were sensitive to the least encroachment of their sovereigns, and displayed in their resistance the same stubborn resolution as when contending with the elements and achieving triumphs over nature. It was not, however, till the middle of the sixteenth century, when the great question of freedom of conscience had thrown all Europe into agitation, that they were called upon to defend the fundamental principles of their liberties. Their earlier insurrections were generally provoked by some infraction of their charters, or some restriction on their commerce, affecting only a particular locality—a single province, or more often a single town. For, in the Middle Ages, freedom was nowhere claimed as a natural right or regarded as the common property of any nation. Its existence was an artificial one. It was confined to a narrow range. It seldom breathed the air of the hills or the open fields, but was a denizen of the city, surrounding itself with strong walls, wearing a gold chain and gown of office, and holding in its hand the charters from which it derived its origin and which contained the measure of its powers.

Self-government—strictly but variously limited—was the vital principle of the communal charters, and except in England, can scarcely be said to have been otherwise recognised, or established on any wider basis. The right of jurisdiction—in other words, of administering justice between man and man, protecting persons and property, and punishing crime according to a scale of penalties determined by the charters—was the one thing common to all incorporated towns. In other respects—the elec-

[31] "Ut nulla gens liberior," remarks Meyer, "ita suæ libertatis nulla usquam pertinacior vindex." Rerum Flandricarum Tomi X., p. 79.

tion or appointment of the magistrates, the apportionment of political power among the different classes of the citizens, the degree, in short, in which the democratic principle had been developed—the widest diversity existed. In general, however, it may be affirmed that the mass of the people took part directly or indirectly in the selection of the municipal government, without being themselves eligible to office.

Commerce and mechanical industry were subject to the same restraints as political freedom. No trade could be pursued, no market held, no commodity exposed for sale, unless permission had first been granted by the sovereign. For the most part each town was confined to a separate branch of industry. One manufactured tapestries or lace, another iron or copper ware. One was the emporium of the trade in wool, another of that in wine. The same restrictive and exclusive spirit prevailed within the towns themselves. It was difficult for a stranger to acquire the rights of citizenship. It was difficult for a citizen to change his occupation or mount to a higher position. Every man was a member of a guild, or incorporated trade; and every man's efforts and ambition tended to elevate his guild rather than himself. The whole community, and every class of the community, were separated and fenced about by stringent regulations. Freedom was there, rights and immunities were there, but doled out in fixed proportions to those who had established a claim to them, who had purchased them, who had served and waited for them. They were granted as privileges; they were guarded as monopolies. Those who possessed them were jealous not merely of any curtailment of them, but of any extension of them to others.

Thus it was that the peaceful and productive energies of man had been concentrated in a few localities, which glowed as with a furnace-heat, but shed no warmth upon the world without. No contrast could be greater than between the prosperity and activity of those regions where natural advantages had at an early period stimulated the efforts and pointed out the means for improvement, and the absolute dearth and inertia that existed everywhere else. The current of trade which set from the Asiatic shores, meeting with a counter current from the north of Europe, found its chief reservoirs in some parts of Italy and in the Netherlands, to be thence distributed in slender rills over the rest of Europe. We read therefore, with wonder indeed, but without incredulity, the accounts which have come down to us from former ages of the number, the size, the opulence, the thronged avenues, and continual bustle of the Belgian cities;[32] the fleets that daily

[32] Some deduction is to be made, however, for the different periods at which the chief towns attained the zenith of their prosperity. Antwerp, the great commercial capital in the sixteenth century, was a place of little importance in the fifteenth, and owed its short-lived greatness to the ruin of Bruges, which is usually attributed to political troubles, but seems to have had its primary cause in the difficulty found in keeping clear the bed of the great canal on which depended its communication with the sea. (See the Relation of Gasparo Contarini, 1525.) A new and more capacious canal was constructed after the place had been almost wholly deserted by the foreign trading companies. (Guicciardini, p. 349.) The manufactures of Louvain, which in 1350 employed 4000 looms and 150,000 workpeople, had much declined at the beginning of the next century. Dixmude and many of the neighbouring towns and villages had lost their woollen manufactures before the middle of the sixteenth century, and the attention of the inhabitants seems to have been turned to the improvement of agriculture. (See Meyer, Commentarii sive Annales Rerum Flandricarum, Antverpiæ, 1561, fol. 195 recto, and Guicciardini, p. 376, et al.) Many facts relating to the growth and condition of the Belgian cities have been collected by Reiffenberg (Commerce des Pays-bas) and Dewez (Hist. particulière des Provinces Belgiques, 3 vols. 8vo., Bruxelles, 1834.)

arrived at or quitted the ports, the multitude of boats that descended the great rivers, the loaded wains that poured incessantly through the streets, the armies of workmen that occupied these citadels of industry, the wealth and luxurious habits of the higher classes, the comfort diffused among the lowest, the intelligence and educational advantages common to all.

As a seat of manufactures the Netherlands occupied a higher relative position than as a commercial emporium. The trade of Venice or of Genoa might have maintained some comparison with that of Bruges or of Antwerp. But in the extent, variety, and importance of their manufactures, the Netherlands were not merely unrivalled, but unapproached. Nothing reached their shores but received a more perfect form; what was coarse and almost worthless became transmuted into something beautiful and valuable. With infinitely more labour than is now requisite for the same amount of production, it was the chief business of Flanders to furnish clothing material for the world. Its silken, linen, and woollen textures were not merely carried to those countries with which Belgium maintained direct commercial relations, but found their way slowly, by obscure channels and multiplied exchanges, to remote corners of the globe. The names of the Flemish towns, attached to their respective fabrics, were familiar words in regions where the European had never set foot, and among races of whose existence he had scarcely heard.[33]

Flanders was something more, however, than the Lancashire of the mediæval world. In a land where

[33] Strada, De Bello Belgico (Lugduni Batavorum, 1645), p. 25.

Nature appeared without any of her charms, and, far from seeking to captivate the mind of man, sought rather to excite his aversion and disgust, Art adorned his life and ministered to his tastes in a degree which had not yet been reached, and which has scarcely ever been surpassed, in other parts of Christendom. In the first half of the fifteenth century the founders of the Flemish school of painting produced works which are still among the masterpieces of the art, and which Italy, though it had already begun to envy and to imitate them, was yet unable to rival. Of music, so far as it had any pretension to be ranked among the arts, the Flemings had almost a complete monopoly.[34] Sculpture was not neglected; and in richness and variety of architecture the Belgian towns were, as they still are, unequalled by those of any other region north of the Alps.

The people of the Netherlands seemed gifted, indeed, with an instinctive knowledge and appreciation of the effects to be produced by the mingling and contrast of colours, sumptuousness of ornament, intricacy of arrangement, and the minute elaboration of details. In this sense their artisans and manufacturers were artists, while art too often became mechanical and prosaic. The peculiarities of their genius and taste are exhibited not only in the brilliant composition, the lavish hues, the wonderful facility of execution and especial superiority in the literal representation of common objects and common life, which characterize their painters; or

[34] The chapel-masters and other musical professors of Belgium were to be found in every part of Europe—at Cologne, Toledo, Milan, and even at Rome. See Guicciardini, p. 56, the Relazioni of Quirini, Badoero, &c., and Reiffenberg's introduction to the Mémoires de J. Duclercq (4 vols. 8vo., Bruxelles, 1835), tom. i., p. 106.

in the massive and lofty towers, with their exquisite tracery, and the gables, *façades*, and entablatures, with their infinite variety of carvings and projectures, which excite the admiration but perplex the eye of the stranger as he passes through the streets of the Flemish towns; but also in the fineness of texture and microscopic patterns of their laces; in their rich carpets; in their gorgeous tapestries—pictures or mosaics[35] executed by the needle or the loom, some of them requiring the patient labour of years, and evincing knowledge of design as well as of the effective combination of colours; and, finally, in the exceeding neatness and quaint but not tasteless decoration which are found in the humblest of their dwellings, and for which they were commended by foreigners centuries ago.[36]

It is rarely that Flemish art or Flemish literature addresses itself to the finest perceptions of the intellect or embodies the highest conceptions of the beautiful. The Belgian mind is ingenious, inventive, laborious, often subtle, sometimes warm and animated, but rarely imaginative and never impassioned. It is strongly tainted with a coarseness of sentiment, which reveals itself in the habits and amusements of the people, and

[35] Soriano thus describes the Flemish tapestries: "Siccome i maestri di mosaico lavorando con piccioli sassetti rappresentano diverse immagini di cose, cosi questi con minutissimi fili di lana e di seta non solamente adornano l'opera di varii colori, ma ancora fingono artificiosamente l'ombre e li lumi, mostrando i rilievi delle figure con quella misura che sanno fare i pittori più eccellenti." Relazioni Venete, Serie I., vol. iii., p. 356.

[36] See Guicciardini and the Relazioni Venete, passim. Owen Feltham, in his "Brief Character of the Low-Countries," dwells much upon this trait: "Every door seems studded with diamonds. The nails and hinges hold a constant brightness, as if rust there were not a quality incident to iron.... Not a cobbler but has his toyes for ornament. Were the knacks of all their houses set together, there would not be such another Bartholomew-Fair in Europe." Lusoria (London, 1677), pp. 48, 49.

from which even the best productions of their painters and their poets—if poets they can be said to possess—are seldom altogether free.[37] It even seems to be indicated by their physical appearance—the flaming complexion,[38] the exuberance of form, the high animal development, which Rubens found so attractive in his countrywomen. In their character are united some of the peculiarities of the two races which, without being actually blended, are here brought so closely in contact; and neither the phlegmatic slowness of the Teuton nor the unrestrained self-indulgence of the Gaul is rendered more attractive by the mixture.

The manners and characteristics of the people of the Netherlands, as described by writers of a former period, are for the most part such as belong to all communities where gainful labour quickens and absorbs the energies of every class—where there is a rapid circulation of wealth, a free interchange of ideas, and frequent intercourse with foreigners. In their common employments and commercial dealings, the inhabitants of the Flemish

[37] What can be more characteristic than the following extract—except, indeed, the works which it so admirably describes?—

"Que j'aime de Teniers les peintures champêtres!
Là, ce sont des buveurs, accroupis sous des hêtres:
Le plaisir est empreint sur leur front bourgeonné.
D'un côté, celui-ci, sur la table incliné,
Suivant du coin de l'œil la légère fumée
Qu'exhale dans les airs sa pipe bien-aimée:
Celui-là, savourant sa douce volupté,
Son verre devant lui, sa belle à son côté,
Et l'entourant d'un bras, sur sa fraîche maîtresse
Fixant des yeux brillans de vin et de tendresse.
. . . . . .
Mais quels sont dans ce coin ces quatre solitaires?
Ce sont de vieux fermiers, entre-choquant leurs verres:
Leur regard est humide: un heureux vermillon
De ses vives couleurs enlumine leur front:
Ils parlent; je crois presque entendre leur langage;
Le rire épanoui sur leur large visage,
Par son aspect joyeux excite ma gaîté,
Et je souris moi-même à leur félicité.
Mon œil vole, charmé, de peinture en peinture,
Et sous des traits divers, c'est toujours la nature." LESBROUSSART, *Poème des Belges.*

[38] A favourite derivation of *Flandre* and *flamand* was from *flamma*, a flame. "Genus maximam partem flammeo colore, adeo ut ab flammeis cervicibus Flammenses dictos quidam existiment." Meyer, Rerum Flandricarum Tomi X., p. 79. See also Oudegherst and Guicciardini.

towns were equally distinguished by their intelligence and their probity. They were said to have originated or perfected all the improvements in the useful arts which had been adopted throughout Europe before the middle of the seventeenth century.[39] Though plodding and persistent in the ordinary business of life, they accepted new opinions with a readiness which was thought to savour of credulity. Even credulity, however, when thus displayed, is a mark of inquisitiveness, and of a desire for information, though not of the ability for testing it. Their temper was neither irritable nor vindictive; but benefits were forgotten by them with as much facility as injuries.[40] Their demeanour towards strangers was courteous and friendly. Order and economy reigned in their households; but a liberal hospitality was universally practised, and by the merchants and other wealthy burghers to an extent which was even censured as lavish and extravagant.

The women are by some writers enthusiastically commended for their comeliness, their frank yet decorous bearing, but especially for their intelligence and skill in the management of their family affairs. Their love of cleanliness was a species of idolatry, and the rites were never disturbed by the sneers of the sceptic or the violence of the iconoclast. Nowhere else was the wife so emphatically the mistress of the house. Within doors the husband made no pretensions to independence, much less to authority. Nor were the women always satisfied with their exclusive rule over the home

[39] Strada, De Bello Belgico, p. 25.

[40] "Beneficiorum memoriam cito amittunt; ... quod vitium tamen contraria rursus virtute pensant, dum et injurias cito obliviscuntur, et odia facile ponunt." Guicciardini, p. 57.—Badoero takes a much less charitable view.

domain. In the northern provinces particularly, female tongues and fingers were as busy and as dexterous in the streets, the market-places, and the shops, as in private dwellings; and the men not unfrequently transacted their business and performed their allotted tasks as vassals and servants.[41]

This peculiarity is accounted for by one of the Venetian envoys as the consequence of a habit which may be thought inconsistent with what have been noticed as the leading traits of the Flemish character. He stigmatizes the Netherlanders as a nation of sots, and tells us that the faculties of the men being habitually muddled by drink, they were compelled to surrender the control of their affairs into the hands of their wives.[42] Although this remark is coloured by the vehement disgust excited in the Italians by a vice from which they were themselves peculiarly exempt, it is certain, from the concurrent testimony of native as well as foreign writers, that drunkenness prevailed among all classes of the population to an extent seldom if ever witnessed in any other part of the world.[43] They sought

[41] "Emptionibus quoque et venditionibus, aliisque virorum propriis actionibus sese miscentes, ac non manum minus, quam linguam interponentes: et quidem ea dexteritate et promptitudine, ut in multis terræ Provinciis, Hollandia nominatim atque Zelandia, viri omnium fere rerum suarum curam uxoribus sæpe relinquant, qui sane agendi modus, ubi ad solemnem illam et fœmineo sexui naturalem fere dominandi obmurmurandique cupiditatem accedit, dubium esse non potest, quin et imperiosas eas et fastidiosas, nonnunquam et insolentes efficiat." Guicciardini, p. 58. And see the Relazioni of Quirini and Badoero.

[42] "Le faccende della mercanzia con varj altri negozj e la cura familiare, per l' imbriachezza degli uomini, sono disposte ad arbitrio delle donne; talmentechè si può dire con biasimo loro che le donne abbino in sè il governo, o che quelli che governano siano da esse comandati." Relazioni Venete, Serie I., vol. iii., p. 292.

[43] Barclay (Icon Animorum, cap. 5) seems, in distinction from other writers, to have rather admired the deep potations of the Flemings, to which he attributes the robustness of their constitutions, and also their national pro-

an excuse for this propensity in the defects of their climate and situation—the dulness of the skies, the humidity of the atmosphere, rendered more unwholesome by constant exhalations from marshes and stagnant waters, and the length and severity of their winter. But there was a grossness of nature in the Fleming and the Hollander not to be dissipated by the brightest skies, the dryest air, or the most favourable "aspects of nature," and noted by all travellers, as a characteristic of the race in the temperate climate of South Africa and under the burning sun of Batavia and of Surinam. Their conduct was seldom influenced by any loftiness of spirit—a noble generosity, a nice sense of honour, or a keen susceptibility to shame. Their life was too commonly divided between a sordid pursuit of gain and a frivolous pursuit of pleasure.[44] There was nothing

sperity. Liquor, he remarks, does not stultify their faculties, but has the effect of subduing them to the degree of calmness suitable for sedentary and mechanical pursuits. He attributes the universality of the habit to a practice of weaning infants by means of a beer-bottle, which he thus describes and applauds: "Quippe adhuc ab ubere pendentibus, quo paulatim lactis desiderium minuat, lagunculas ad similitudinem uberis effictas, et hordeaceo potu plenas tradunt in manu: tum rudis et incuriosa ætas subindè ad os referens tardè meantem potum, sugendi similitudine capitur, tum etiam innocentis otii fastidium levat. Nec utilitate res caret: quippe valida membra succoque lætissimo ad venustatem florentia ita institutam infantiam decorant."

The same writer—whose *name* must be allowed to carry with it a weight of authority on such points—observes that the Flemish beer provoked, instead of quenching, thirst; the grosser particles adhering to the jaws, and requiring to be washed away by successive draughts.

[44] "Nel far usure da ogni banda e di ogni vil cosa, sono, non solo sempre intenti, ma molto avveduti e sagaci.... Non si vergognano di ricevere spesso cortesie senza pensare di ricambiarle.... Son faceti, e non si guardano, per indurre a ridere, dal dir cose disoneste alla presenza di figliuole non maritate. Non si vede generalmente in essi timor d' infamia, perchè molti, puniti per giustizia di triste opere commesse, sono amichevolmente tenuti in compagnia, e da' giovani sono tolte vecchie per moglie ancora che siano state meretrici, purchè diano loro denari." (Relazione di Badoero.) "Their houses," says the satirical Feltham, "they keep cleaner

buoyant in their revelry or ethereal in their enjoyment. Ostentatious profuseness and prolonged convivialities characterized the festive meetings of the wealthy.[45]

than their bodies, their bodies than their souls."

Badoero is not less severe in his remarks on the manners of the women. He describes them as, in many places, scarcely less addicted to intemperance than the men, as "quasi tutte meretric, per la smisurata cupidità del denaro," and as spending every vacant hour in places of public and promiscuous resort. Quirini says, somewhat less strongly, "Le donne . . . hanno costumi tutti allegri; ed il tempo che lor sopravvanza tutto lo spendono . . . in balli, canti, suoni, nè altro fanno che darsi a piacere." Various matters connected with domestic discipline, especially the little restraint imposed upon young females—who went abroad, at all hours, unaccompanied and without permission—attracted the animadversion of the Italian writers, whose censures sometimes remind us of the pungent strictures on the Flemish character in 'Villette' and 'The Professor.'

Commines, writing at an earlier period, tells us of "les baignoiries et aultres festoyemens avec femmes, grans et desordonnez, et a peu de honte. Je parle," he adds, "des femmes de basse condition." Mémoires, tom. i., p. 20.

[45] "In conviviis, epulis, commessationibus . . . vix ullum plærique habent modum." Meyer, Rerum Flandricarum Tomi X.—"Les convis et les bancquetz plus grans et plus prodigues que en nul aultre lieu, dont j'aye eu congnoissance." Commines.—"De die nonnunquam et noctu tanto se potu ingurgitant, ut præter alia, quæ non raro inde existunt mala, . . . mortem sibi accelerent." Guicciardini.

"To a feast they come readily," says Feltham; "but being set once you must have patience: they are longer eating meat than we preparing it. If it be to supper, you conclude timely, when you get away by day-break. They drink down the Evening-star, and drink up the Morning-star." Yet "the truth is," he concludes, "the completest drinker in Europe is your English Gallant. . . . Time was, the Dutch had the better of it, but of late he hath lost it by prating too long over his pot. . . . He drinks as if he were short-winded, and as it were eats his drink by morsels, rather besieging his brains than assaulting them. But the Englishman charges home on the sudden, swallows it whole, and like a hasty Tide, fills and flows himself, till the mad brain swims and tosses on the hasty fume. As if his liver were burning out his stomach, and he striving to quench it drowns it. So the one is drunk sooner, and the other longer; as if striving to recover the wager, the Dutchman would still be the perfectest Soaker." Lusoria, p. 55.

Deep drinking may be said to have been a characteristic of all northern, and particularly of all Teutonic, nations. But the "gros et gras Flamand" was commonly regarded as the type of coarseness and sensuality. Charles the Fifth, a true representative of his countrymen, owed something of his popularity to his power of draining an *imperial* flagon of iced beer without once showing the tip of his nose.

The *kirmesse*, or rustic carnivals, and other holiday celebrations of the lower classes, were scenes of riot and unbounded license.[46] If any portion of the entertainment was of a more refined or intellectual description, it consisted in the performance of some allegorical pantomime, pedantic in its meaning and mechanical in its construction, or in the recitations of the "guilds of rhetoric," the stupefying effects of which, to judge from such specimens as have been preserved, can hardly have been exceeded by those of the most fiery spirits or the heaviest beer.

Such, then, were the Netherlands four centuries ago —a land of plenty, rich in substance and in people,[47] the workshop and the mart of Europe, receiving in its lap the commerce of the world, supplying all nations with the products of its cunning hands, adorned with the fruits of a material civilization luxuriant even to rankness.

Here, as elsewhere, the nobles formed a community

[46] Meyer, Rerum Flandricarum Tomi X., pp. 78, 79.—Guicciardini, pp. 58, 59.—Relazione di Badoero.—Confirmatory passages may be found in the chronicles of Chastellain, Duclercq, and other writers of the fifteenth century.

Meyer, whose portraiture of the manners of his countrymen in his own age is not a flattering one, gives a frightful picture of their dissoluteness at an earlier period. Speaking apparently of the year 1379, he asserts that, in the space of ten months, the number of homicides committed in the taverns and brothels of Ghent amounted to 1400. (Commentarii sive Annales, fol. 170 recto.) This statement is certainly incredible. Lenz (Nouvelles Archives historiques) and Gachard (note to Barante, Ducs de Bourgogne, Bruxelles, 1840, tom. i., p. 48) propose to correct the passage by substituting 4, or, at the most, 14. But it is impossible, without a total disregard of the context, to attribute the insertion of three, or even two, numerals to a blunder of the copyist or the printer. Moreover, Flanders, though it may have been the Promised Land of mediæval history, was not exactly an Eden.

[47] "Multiplex in sobole et in substantia." Glanville, cited by Reiffenberg, Commerce des Pays-bas.

apart, less exalted and less exclusive than in other parts of the Continent, but still a distinct and privileged class, finding ample compensation for the loss of a barren grandeur in the rapid increase of their wealth, and in means of enjoyment and facilities for display to which their brethren in other countries were still comparatively strangers.[48] In mere splendour and sumptuousness their mode of living has not, perhaps, been equalled by that of any similar class in later times, while it was destitute, of course, of many things now considered indispensable by those who have no pretensions to rank or wealth. In the progress of society luxury precedes comfort, and the arts that embellish life attain their highest development, while those that minister to its convenience are still in their infancy.[49]

The counts of Flanders had long been pre-eminent among the great feudatories and the peers of France for

[48] Schassek notices the fact, as peculiar to this region, that the "homines nobili et claro genere orti non solent in pagis, sed in urbibus habitare. Ideo multifaria oblectamenta et delicias habent." Ritter-, Hof-, und Pilger-Reise.

[49] There is, perhaps, nearly as much truth as point in Mr. Emerson's remark, that "the Frenchman invented the ruffles, and the Englishman added the shirt." The feudal nobles, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, dressed in the costliest satins and velvets, but seem to have considered clean linen as a luxury, and a night-dress as an absolute superfluity. (See Reiffenberg, Commerce des Pays-bas, and Introduction to Duclercq.)

Nor is it mere luxury, or material splendour, that precedes the minor conveniences of life. Man is, after all, more noble than he thinks himself; satisfying his physical wants and desires —"making himself comfortable"—is not the first, but the last object to which he devotes his attention and the powers of his intellect. He did not, as some writers seem to imagine, wait for riches and leisure before he began to cultivate his mind and aspire to the realization of a lofty ideal. Poetry, abstract philosophy, the highest flights of the imagination, the masterpieces of art, belong to the dawn, not to the noonday, of civilization. In the days of Pericles and of Plato there was not sufficient mechanical ingenuity in Athens to invent a street-door which should open inwards; a preparatory tap warned the passer-by to stand aside while the door was opened.

the amplitude of their resources and the splendour of their court. But when their dominions passed under the rule of the aspiring house of Burgundy, a new stimulus was given to the ambition of the nobles, new demands were made on the ingenuity of the people, and the court of Philip the Good shone with a magnificence unequalled by that of any sovereign in Christendom. When this prince was in attendance on his liege lord, the king of France, the number and superb equipments of his retinue threw royal state completely into the shade. He made his entrance into a town preceded by bands of musicians with trumpets and other instruments of silver, and escorted by a numerous troop of cavaliers and men-at-arms, whose horses were caparisoned with cloth of gold studded with jewelry and precious stones. Wherever he fixed his residence,—at Brussels, at Dijon, or at Paris,—his apartments were furnished and adorned with the costliest productions of Flemish industry and art. His palace was a scene of perpetual festivities, of sumptuous banquets and gorgeous pageantries that remind us of the early barbaric pomp of Eastern despots. His library consisted of the rarest manuscripts and the earliest specimens of printed books splendidly bound and illuminated—the nucleus of a collection which, enriched by successive additions, is now one of the most important in the world. He had accumulated treasure to an almost incredible amount, in gold, silver, and precious stones, comprising images, crucifixes, reliquaries, plate of every description, gems of the largest size and purest water, and heaps of glittering coin.[50] His house-

[50] Leo von Rozmital, who, in 1465-67, visited the different courts of Western Europe, was not only admitted to a view of Philip's treasure, but was requested, by the Duke's order, to accept as a present any jewels which he

hold—afterwards adopted as a model by the Spanish sovereigns, the wealthiest and most powerful monarchs of the sixteenth century—embraced a multitude of officers arranged under four great divisions, and constituting a hierarchy the grades of which ascended from the menial duties of the kitchen to the highest dignities of the state.[51]

It was an age, indeed, in which every petty *seigneur* aped the regal style in his mode of living, maintained an establishment composed of domestics of many different grades, was waited upon by valets and pages of noble birth, observed a rigorous etiquette in his family,

might select. The noble Bohemian declined to profit by this munificence, on the ground that he had undertaken his journey not for the purpose of acquiring riches, but of perfecting himself in chivalrous exercises. His suite were overpowered by the glittering spectacle. Tetzel, the German narrator of the tour, undertook to reckon up the value of the different articles, but soon found it impracticable, and contents himself with declaring that there was nothing like it in the whole world, and that it far exceeded the famous Venetian collection. (Ritter-, Hof-, und Pilger-Reise durch die Abendlande.—Portions of the Latin narrative of Schassek have been published by M. Isidore Hye in the Messager des Sciences Historiques, Gand, 1847, and form the subject of an amusing and characteristic article, by the late Richard Ford, in the Quarterly Review, No. 180.)

Several inventories of the contents of the Burgundian treasury have been preserved. Two have been printed by the Count de Laborde, who has given to a work designed to illustrate the state of the arts in the fifteenth century the appropriate title of "Les Ducs de Bourgogne." (3 vols. 8vo., Paris, 1849-52.)

[51] Lists of the officers and domestics of the Burgundian household at different periods may be found in Labarre, Mém. pour servir à l'Hist. de France et de Bourgogne. See, also, for similar lists and many curious particulars relative to the regulations and usages of the court, Mém. de l'Acad. de Dijon, Années 1858-1859; Mém. et Doc. Inéd. de la Franche-Comté, tom. iii.; Duclercq, tom. i., Introduction. The ceremonial and the duties appropriated to the different departments—the *Panetrie*, *Échansonnerie*, *Cuisine*, and *Écurie*, and other divisions subordinate to these—are elaborately described by Lamarche, tom. ii., pp. 479-556. It has been surmised that these usages may originally have been derived from the Byzantine court; but, in truth, they had grown up naturally out of the ideas and sentiments of feudal society.

and made his castle, in short, a little court. But what was elsewhere represented in an abridged form, on special occasions, or with insufficient means or paraphernalia, was enacted daily and hourly, in all its fulness and with all its pomp, at the court of Burgundy. The levee, the procession, the council, the audience, the service of spices,[52] the banquet of state, the countless usages of the "*grand cérémonial*," relics of which are still fondly preserved by those who have little conception of their original meaning, formed the routine of existence with Philip the Good and his nobles; and the chronicles of Olivier de Lamarche and other writers who occupied places in the Burgundian household were a storehouse of precedents to which the masters of the ceremonies at the courts of Paris, Vienna, and Madrid were accustomed to resort.

Some particulars less frequently described have been preserved to us in the careful record of a lady whose mother had been maid of honour to the Duchess Isabella, the third wife of Philip the Good.[53] The laws of precedence and the regulations in regard to the reception or entertainment of persons of every rank and degree gave room, of course, for many niceties of construction;[54]

[52] The practice, common to all feudal courts, of serving tropical spices, sweetmeats, and preserves, in the public audiences to ambassadors and other distinguished guests, seems to have arisen from the extreme rarity and costliness of these articles at a time when there was no direct intercourse with the East, and America had not yet been discovered.

[53] Les Honneurs de la Cour, printed by Saint-Palaye in his Mém. sur l'Ancienne Chevalerie, tom. iii.—The authoress was Aliénor de Poitiers, Vicomtesse de Furness, her mother Isabella de Souza, a Portuguese lady of high descent.

[54] A single instance may be cited. On occasion of an expected visit from Mdlle. de Penthèvre (a relative of the Duke of Brittany), "I remember," says the fair Elinor, "that a council was held to determine what degree of honour should be paid her by Madame de Charolais; and it was ordained that when Mdlle. de P. had entered

and the distinctions of privilege by which the minutest differences were marked—in the position at table, in the forms of salutation and address, in the decorations of a chamber, in the length of a lady's train and the manner of carrying it, in the stinted courtesies accorded by a superior, and in the menial services rendered by one however slightly inferior—present a picture hardly to be equalled of a strangely artificial state of society. On one occasion we find a nobleman, a knight of the Golden Fleece, waiting bareheaded at table on his own daughter, who had married a man of somewhat higher rank than herself, and actually falling on his knee when he presented the basin and napkin to her previously to the repast.[55]

When the difference of rank was incontestable, a great personage would often intimate his courteous feelings towards one of a lower grade by affecting to decline the marks of deference to which he was entitled; and in such cases a somewhat whimsical struggle occurred between the parties—the one resolute to perform the customary obligations, the other to dispense with them. But where the difference admitted of doubt, or an actual equality existed, the contest was of a different kind. The Duchess of Burgundy, having gone to pay a visit to the French

the apartment, and had made the *two first obeisances*, then Madame de Charolais should advance *three steps* towards her."

The highest authority, in matters of this kind, was Madame de Namur, who "had a great book where she had written everything down," and who was constantly referred to as "la plus grande sçachante de touts états, que dame qui fust au royaume de France."

[55] This, it seems, was censured "by the discreet" as an act of folly on the part of the father who performed it, "et encore plus grande à sa fille de le souffrir." Yet it appears from the same work that John the Fearless, though himself a prince of the blood, showed similar respect to his daughter-in-law, Michelle of France, Philip's first wife. He always knelt to her, and addressed her as "Madame."

court, on her way to the queen's apartment had her train borne by one of her ladies, but, at the moment of entering, hastily gathered up the rustling folds with her own hand, as etiquette required her in the presence of royalty to carry it herself. She kissed the hands of the queen and the dauphin; but when she came to the Duchess of Anjou, whose husband stood in nearly the same affinity as her own to the majesty of France, the two ladies made their obeisances at precisely the same angle, and neither of them, we are told, was in danger of bursting her *aiguillettes* in the eagerness of her genuflexions. Isabella then kissed all the ladies of the royal suite, but only as many of the Duchess of Anjou's attendants as her rival —on whom she kept a sharp eye all the while—saluted of hers.[56]

But the most singular of these customs—those which we may suppose to bear the least resemblance to any existing practices—related to the manner of evincing grief for the death of a near relative. Every people has its peculiar etiquette of sorrow; and in feudal Europe, as in every country and in every age, the peculiar burden of the mourning ceremonies was borne by the women. The widow of a Hindoo lays herself upon the burning pile where his body is consumed; a Christian lady, in the fifteenth century, who had lost her husband, her father, a brother, or other relative, was expected to take to her bed, and to remain there for a certain number of days or weeks, the length of the confinement being punctiliously proportioned to the rank of the parties and

[56] Honneurs de la Cour (Saint-Palaye, tom. iii., p. 199).—The writer adds, that "not for anything would the Duchess of Burgundy have walked behind" her of Anjou; and the latter being equally resolved, they took care not to be together when there was any walking to be done.

the nearness of kin. Isabella of Bourbon, the first wife of Charles the Bold, after having attended the obsequies celebrated in honour of her father, returned to her chamber, where she remained for six weeks, lying most of that time on her bed, completely attired, having on a lofty head-dress and a large mantle trimmed with fur. The bed was covered with a white cloth, while the walls of the apartment were hung with black, and black cloth in place of a carpet was spread upon the floor. These were the solemnities performed by a princess.[57] A noble lady of inferior rank kept her bed for the same length of time when she had been bereaved of her lord. Only in the case of her receiving a visit from the wife of her sovereign was it her duty to rise; but even then she did not leave her apartment. For the death of a parent she remained in a recumbent posture only nine days; the rest of the six weeks she passed in sitting on the bed, which was first covered with black cloth. It may have been that this "mockery of woe," in which the mourner lay in state as well as the corpse, had its use in depriving affliction of some portion of its reality. Sorrow, nursed with solemn pomp, was changed, perhaps, into a sense of self-importance, or, at the worst, mitigated into tedium.

Such were, in the fifteenth century, some of the privileges of illustrious birth—the envied privileges; for it seems that the lower grades of the nobility, far from seeking to emancipate themselves from the burdens imposed upon them by this cumbrous ceremonial, were covetous of the stricter forms appropriated to their superiors. The fair chronicler from whose pages we

[57] A Queen of France (so Elinor heard) was obliged, after the death of the King, to keep her bed for a year.

have gathered these details expresses her indignation at the conduct of such ambitious persons as indulged in a more rigid etiquette than their station entitled them to use. "If any one practises these forms," she says, "in a different manner from what I have here described, it will now be evident that this proceeds from vain-glory and presumption; and such irregular observances are to be regarded as null, as being merely voluntary, and contrary both to rule and reason." [58]

If grief itself was thus turned into a fantastic spectacle, how grotesque were the devices of gaiety, how extravagant the "pomp, and feast, and revelry" of the Burgundian court! The example of the sovereign [59] was closely imitated by the nobles, who vied with each other

[58] "Ce sont les honneurs ordonnez, préservez, et gardez en touts royaumes et pays où l'on doibt user de raison. . . . . Quiconque en use autrement que dict est, il doibt estre notoire à chacun que cela se fait par gloire et présomption, et doibt estre réputé pour nul, à cause que ce sont choses volontaires, déréglées, et hors de raison." Idem, pp. 263, 266.

She admits, however, that there were also people who, at the time of her writing (about 1490), were inclined to rebel against this code of reason, contending that such things might have suited a former time, but that now "it was quite another world." "But such allegations," she remarks, "are not sufficient to break down ancient and ordained usages."

[59] The Bohemian tourists have much to say in praise of Philip's hospitality. Tetzel says he gave them "das aller kostlichst mal das ich all mein tag ie gessen habe. . . . Es war do ein kostliche kredenz aufgerichtet und unmassen ander kostlich gezin und wesen uberflüssig, ungleublich, davon zu schreiben. Und gab zwey und dreissig essen, almal truog man acht essen mit einander von gar kostlichen speis, und von allen getrank, das man mag erdenken, das war genug do." (Ritter-, Hof-, und Pilger-Reiser.) Somewhat *more* than enough, since Schassek, unfortunately, was so dazzled and bewildered by the fascinations of the Duchess and other ladies, that he drank too much wine, and could with difficulty find his way back to his lodgings—"nam potus eram." Tetzel, we may hope, was equally drunk when he construed the affability of these high-born dames as a proof that, "wenn mein herr [Leo von Rozmital] wolt, so mocht er die mächtigsten frawen laden allein: die vergunt man im, und waren mit meinem hernn frolich."

in a succession of *fêtes* distinguished by a sumptuous magnificence and an unbounded conviviality. It was the custom, on an occasion of this kind, for the host to present a chaplet to one of the company, whose turn it became to furnish the next entertainment.[60] Among the banquets given by Philip the Good one obtained a peculiar celebrity from its connection with a project which continued for more than a century to be the dream of princes and the aspiration of Christendom. It took place at Lille, in 1454, and was intended to give *éclat* to the proclamation of a crusade for the recovery of Constantinople, the memorable siege of which had terminated the year before in its capture by the Turks. An immense hall, hung with tapestry representing the Labours of Hercules, was surrounded by five tiers of galleries in the form of an amphitheatre. These were for the accommodation of the spectators, who were required to be masked—a device which would perhaps be approved by the manager of a modern theatre as a means of fixing the attention of the audience on the business of the stage. The tables, three in number, were covered with ponderous decorations that must have tasked the ingenuity not only of cooks and confectioners, but of artificers in every department of mechanics. Here a fortress, surrounded by walls and ditches, and flanked by towers, was attacked by a besieging army; there a lake was to be seen, with castles and hamlets on its borders, and boats sailing on its surface. On one table was a church, with its lofty steeple and stained

[60] Chronique de Mathieu de Coussy (ed. Buchon), tom. ii., p. 87, 88.—Lamarche, tom. ii., p. 163.—Previously to the entertainment about to be noticed in the text, the chaplet had been presented to Philip, at the house of the Count d'Estampes, by a child of twelve years, who recited some verses, intimating that it was sent by a lady who bore the title of the "Princess of Joy."

windows, and within it an organ and a choir of singers; on another, a mammoth pasty, in which a band of twenty-eight musicians were concealed. There were, besides, a forest, filled with wild animals of every species; a prairie enamelled with flowers, and surrounded by huge rocks formed of sapphires and rubies; a grove in which birds flew from the pursuit of the hunter, and were caught by sportive ladies and their gallant cavaliers; a carrack, or galley, larger than the ordinary size, completely rigged, and manned by sailors, who took in the cargo, pulled at the ropes, and went through all the manœuvres of setting sail; a mountain, with its summit covered with ice; a desert where tigers and serpents were engaged in furious combat; and statues of naked boys, which served as fountains and scattered rose-water around in streams. The *buffet*—one of those elaborate pieces of architectural upholstery of which specimens still exist to attest the mechanical skill and the luxurious habits of the Middle Ages—was loaded with gold and silver vessels of every form and size. On either side of it was a column, one having attached to it a female figure, from whose right breast flowed a stream of ippocras; while to the other a lion—not, as some writers have supposed, an automatic figure or mere sculptured representation, but a live native of the African deserts—was fastened with an iron chain.[61]

On a raised platform at the head of the first table sat the duke. He was arrayed with his accustomed splendour—his dress of black velvet[62] serving as a dark

[61] "Un fort beau lion tout vif." De Coussy, tom. ii., p. 99.

A collection of veritable lions is mentioned among the wonders seen by the Bohemian tourists at the Burgundian court.

[62] De Coussy describes him as dressed, in the early part of the day, "de velours de couleur sur velours noir." Duclercq also says, "Ledit

ground that heightened the brilliancy of the precious stones, valued at a million of gold crowns, with which it was profusely decked. Among the guests were a numerous body of knights who had passed the morning in the tilting-field, and fair Flemish dames whose flaunting beauty had inspired these martial sports. Each course was composed of forty-four dishes, which were placed on chariots painted in gold and azure, and were moved along the tables by concealed machinery. As soon as the company was seated the bells in the church began to chime, and three little choristers, issuing from the edifice, sang with melodious and well-attuned voices "a very sweet *chanson*." The musicians in the pasty also performed on various instruments; the swell of the organ mingled with the dulcet tones of the flutes and horns; and, to complete the harmony, two trumpeters, seated back to back upon a horse fantastically caparisoned and made to move backwards through the hall, blew lustily from time to time.

In the intervals of the repast a variety of uncouth monsters were introduced, such as still move the wonderment of children at a Christmas pantomime. Now it was a wild boar, with a griffin mounted on its back; anon a flying dragon flapped his enormous wings. To these exhibitions—*entremets*,[63] as they were called—

Duc, ledit jour, qui avoit passé seize ans devant, ne avoit donné livrée de robbe synon de noir, feit faire a ses gens robbes de couleurs, comme paravant lesdits seize ans il avoit accoustumé, et lui mesme porta couleur." Probably he wore, as was common, a mantle of crimson or some other bright colour. In the miniatures Philip is almost always represented "en noir."

[63] This word seems originally to have been confined to the sense in which it is here used—that of shows or performances exhibited between the courses. At the period of our narrative, however, we find it employed also to designate the ornaments and representations placed upon the table,—such objects as were to be looked at, not eaten,—never, apparently, in the modern sense of "side-dishes."

succeeded a more regular dramatic entertainment. A curtain of green silk, at one end of the apartment, drew up, revealing a stage on which the story of Jason and the Golden Fleece was performed. At last came the grand scene, to which all the rest had been merely preliminary, and which was to announce to the audience the purpose of the festival. A giant appeared, leading an elephant. On its back was a tower, where sat a personage in female attire, but no other, in fact, than the worthy chronicler Olivier de Lamarche, representing Holy Mother Church. After the recitation of a long complaint in verse, setting forth the perils to which she was exposed from the attacks of the Infidel, this ancient lady appealed to the noble cavaliers who were present to arm themselves in her defence. Hereupon, with great ceremony, a pheasant,[64] having around its neck a collar of gold richly garnished with pearls and other gems, was brought into the hall by a king-at-arms; and the duke caused a paper to be read aloud, in which he made a vow—to God first, then to the Holy Virgin, and lastly to the ladies and to the pheasant—that, except in the case of certain contingencies,—not altogether unlikely to occur,—he would himself take part in an enterprise against the Moslems, and would seize the earliest opportunity of engaging the Sultan in single combat. As knight after knight came forward to take the oath, a sort of delirious excitement—in which the

[64] The pheasant, the heron, the peacock, and the swan were held in peculiar estimation, both on account of their beauty and as delicacies for the table. The library of the dukes of Burgundy contains several manuscripts entitled "Vœux du Hairon," "Vœux du Paon," &c. In the romances and *fabliaux* of the Middle Ages the peacock is spoken of as the "noble oiseau," the "viande des preux," the "nourriture des amants." Beiffenberg, Introduction to Duclercq

wine that had flowed so lavishly, the gay shows, and the charm of voluptuous glances had a part—took possession of the assembly. The most whimsical vows were registered—one impudent cavalier swearing that, if he did not obtain the favours of his mistress before he set out on the expedition, he would marry, on his return, the first woman he should meet with who had twenty thousand crowns. Then the hall was cleared; and these incongruous pageants, in which farcical thaumaturgy was mixed up with courtly and chivalric ceremonies, ended with the more graceful and pleasing exhibitions of the dance.[65]

One of the narrators of this scene confesses that he could not refrain from censuring in his own mind the enormous expense which it entailed, and the ridicule which such mummeries seemed to cast upon a serious undertaking. But when he made this remark to a person high in Philip's confidence, the latter answered: "Be assured, my friend, and receive it on my faith as a knight, that these banquets and festivities are only meant as an earnest to the world of our noble master's real intention to play that part which becomes him in the defence of Christendom."[66] The sentiment thus earnestly expressed puts in its true light the fondness

[65] The most elaborate—and most wearisome—descriptions of the "Fête du Faisan" are those given by De Coussy (tom. ii., pp. 85-174) and Olivier de Lamarche (tom. ii., pp. 167-208). The different vows are recorded by both at full length. Olivier, who, in 1447, had been promoted from the situation of a page to that of "écuyer pannetier," or squire of the pantry, had, as we have seen, a conspicuous part assigned him in the ceremony; and he is supposed also to have written the verses and superintended some portions of the pageant. More concise accounts may be found in Duclercq, tom. ii., pp. 195-199, and in a letter of Jehan de Molesme, printed in the Col. de Doc. Inédits sur l'Hist. de France, Mélanges, tom. iv., p. 457 et seq.

[66] De Coussy, tom. ii., p. 175.

for ceremony and magnificent display so conspicuous in the Burgundian dukes. Philip the Good was not a man of a merely frivolous character, content with the semblance of power or with its outward trappings and adornments. He was a proud, aspiring prince, an ardent and a successful politician. But his aspirations and his policy assumed a form that belonged rather to an earlier age than to that in which he lived. He had no conception of a government which confined its aims within the limits of utility, which denuded its acts as far as possible of ostentation, and which laboured to effect its purposes by subtle and tortuous methods. He knew nothing of statecraft as practised by the Italians and by Louis the Eleventh. Parade and flourish were with him a necessary part of the exercise of sovereignty; to fill a conspicuous place in the eyes of Christendom was a sufficient object for his ambition; and he would as readily have led his vassals in a crusade for the recovery of the Holy Land as to the conquest of a neighbouring province.[67] The eulogy pronounced on

[67] Although no crusade was actually undertaken, the sincerity of Philip's intentions and his zeal in what was regarded as the common cause of Christendom are attested by various facts. By a series of ordinances, promulgated in 1454, he effected a large reduction in the expenses of his household, with the view of providing funds for this enterprise. In the same year he made a tour through several of the German states on his way to Ratisbon, to take part in a diet which had been convoked for the purpose of arranging a general plan of operations. But neither the Emperor Frederick nor any of the electoral princes, with the exception of the Margrave of Brandenburg, had cared to be present, and the project consequently fell to the ground. Notwithstanding this discouragement, the Duke of Burgundy subsequently fitted out an armament, which he placed under the command of his natural son Antony, to act in the Mediterranean and on the coast of Asia in conjunction with the fleets of other powers. Owing to the lukewarmness of the Venetians, this scheme also was rendered abortive, and the Burgundian forces were compelled to return without having had the opportunity of exhibiting their prowess in an encounter with the Moslems.

him by Chastellain is doubtless coloured by the noble hue of sentiment peculiar to the writer's mind, reflecting rather an ideal than an actual character; but it is at least that ideal which the real Philip would have been best pleased at being thought to resemble. He is there represented as the "pearl of valiant men," the star of chivalry, and the champion of the Church; as affable to all, whether of high or low estate, and especially to women, whom, indeed, he was apt to regard with glances all too amiable, "quickly surrendering his heart to the wishes of his eyes." He looked in the faces of those to whom he spoke, used no unseemly language, and sealed his promise with his word alone. He was leal and debonnair, of great largess, stern and defiant to the presumptuous, but clement to such as sued for his forgiveness. Gold and silver he held as dross; but he gave his heart to jewels and precious stuffs. He was rich in vestments, loved feasting and shows, but was a master of all knightly exercises, a skilful rider, fond of the chase and bold in the tourney. His port and semblance were those of one born to high dignity, and seemed to announce even to the stranger, "I am a prince." [68]

It is as the stronghold of feudalism, where the man-

[68] "Son semblant seulement le jugeait empereur; et valoit de porter couronne, seulement sur les grâces de nature; se monstroit en terre entre les princes comme une estoile au ciel; et parloit son viaire, ce sembloit, disant, 'Je suis prince.'" Déclaration de tous les hauts et glorieuses Adventures du Duc Philippe de Bourgogne, Chastellain, Œuvres (ed. Buchon, 1837), p. 505.

In person, according to the same authority, Philip was of the middle height; his limbs firmly set and finely proportioned; his bones large; his veins swelling and "full of blood;" his face long, "like those of his ancestors," lips of a deep red, nose long and straight, complexion somewhat dark, eyes full of expression, hair "between blond and black," eyebrows thick, and "curling up like horns" in moments of passion.

ners and ideas that were elsewhere in a state of rapid decay still maintained their vigour, that we must regard the Burgundian court. The setting sun of chivalry shone upon it with full splendour. It was the resort of all who sought to acquire *los*, and to assert the beauty and virtue of their mistresses by deeds of high emprisq. Hardly a week went by in which some one or other of the Flemish towns did not witness the proclamation of a tournament or joust. As the glittering throng of cavaliers passed along the streets, the windows and balconies were crowded with fair dames, noble as well as simple, who waved their kerchiefs, and prayed that their favoured knights might preserve their honour and renown untarnished. The lists were filled with spectators of every rank. When the heralds and pursuivants cried, "*Lachez, lachez!*" the combatants issued from their pavilions, and mounted their high-mettled and richly-caparisoned steeds, which pranced and caracolled in conscious pride. The trumpets sounded; the knights galloped through the arena; the ashen spear was shivered against the tempered steel; the shouts of the spectators proclaimed their interest in the spectacle; the ladies threw their gloves and adornments into the lists: a knight was unhorsed, and his opponent sprang to the ground and raised his battle-axe or sword. But a cry of pity was heard from every side; the duke threw down his baton, and the combat was at an end.[69]

Thus all was gay, voluptuous, purely mimic and harmless in these encounters; and yet with what solemnity, what an entire belief in the importance, the dignity, and the reality of the scene, did the actors per-

[69] See the chronicles of De Coussy, Duclercq, Lamarche, and especially the Chronique du Bon Chevalier Messire Jacques de Lalain (ed. Buchon) passim.

form their parts! In no age or country did the fervent and devotional spirit of chivalry glow with purer lustre in a gallant heart than in that of Jacques de Lalain, called *par excellence* "the good knight," and the brightest ornament of Philip's court. Trained in virtue and piety from his earliest years, and in that stately courtesy which was considered as the crowning grace of the accomplished nobleman, he was inspired, while still a youth, with the single desire of maintaining by his exploits that reputation for valour and spotless honour which had been bequeathed to him with an illustrious name. He hears, at Antwerp, that a Sicilian knight has been seen passing from his hostelry to the church, with an iron fetter on his left leg, attached to a chain of gold, intimating that its wearer has bound himself to perform a certain number of exploits in honour of the mistress of his heart. At this news the soul of Jacques de Lalain is filled with joy; "humbly and devoutly he offers thanks to our Lord and to his Virgin Mother," and "on bended knees and with joined hands" beseeches them that they will grant him aid and counsel in this affair; for it seems to him that the requests and petitions which he has daily put up are now about to be granted. He summons the king-at-arms of the Golden Fleece, and opens to him his intention to "deliver" this noble cavalier, who had come from afar to seek the means of accomplishing his vow. With many ceremonies and courtly rites the "chapters," or preliminaries of the combat, are arranged. The day and place are appointed by the duke. Jacques de Lalain arrives at the spot accompanied by a brilliant cavalcade of five hundred knights and noble youths. "Certes," says the chronicler, "they ran many beautiful courses, and

neither of them failed in a single instance of his aim; although so large and heavy were their lances, that often they were not broken in the shock. Notwithstanding which, they ceased not to run and tilt against each other until night, when the duke requested them to be contented with the good and valiant manner in which they had performed their devoir."

Then our gallant Jacques sets out upon a pilgrimage of honour, hangs up his shield at the "Fountain of Tears" near Chalons, on the high road from Burgundy to Italy, and holds the pass against all comers. Afterwards he sends his herald before him to the court of France to announce his emprise, and incite some kindred spirit to condescend to his request—without success, however, the nobles there having had lately quite enough of real fighting to keep them in practice, and Charles the Seventh rather discountenancing these displays. He continues his journey into Spain, where he is received with more honour than is to be paid in a succeeding century to the Knight of La Mancha, of whom he seems the very prototype; crosses the sea, and travels through the length and breadth of England without finding a single opportunity of exhibiting his prowess — only a Welsh knight hurrying after him, when he has taken ship, to arrange the terms of a meeting in Flanders; and, returning unscathed to his native soil, receives, at the early age of thirty-two, his final "deliverance," not from the lance of a noble adversary, but in rude combat with the rebellious citizens of Ghent.[70]

[70] Fantastic as the career of this hero may appear to the modern reader, it is impossible to peruse the biography, prolix though it be, written by Saint-Remy, Toison king-at-arms, without being to some degree infected

Nor was the court of Burgundy wanting in a fit historiographer of lofty characters and gallant deeds. Chastellain—last and greatest of chivalric chroniclers—celebrated the departing glory of the Middle Ages in language sonorous like a trumpet, quaint, refulgent, rich, like the emblazonments of an armorial shield.[71]

But the sentiments thus embodied in literature as well as in private life were invested with still higher dignity and grandeur by an institution, which, though founded by a vassal, not by a sovereign prince, far surpassed in lustre any other of the kind in Europe. This was the order of the Golden Fleece, created by Philip the Good on the occasion of his marriage with the daughter of King John of Portugal. The duke had been already twice wedded, when, in 1428, being a widower and without legitimate heirs, he sent ambassadors to the Portuguese court to negotiate his marriage

with the enthusiastic admiration with which "the good knight" was regarded by his contemporaries. When his death was announced to the army, clarions and trumpets were hushed; at the distance of a bow-shot not a sound was audible; and many faces, that of the sovereign among others, were bathed in tears. "Great pity was it," exclaims Saint-Remy, "that he *reigned* no longer in the world; for the like of him was neither known nor could be found in any land—a more perfect, valiant, bold, or accomplished knight. He was the flower of chivalry—beautiful as Paris, pious as Æneas, wise as Ulysses, in battle ardent and ireful as Hector. Yet never was there man more gentle and debonnair. He was sweet, humble, amiable, and courteous, a great almsgiver and very compassionate, ever ready to assist the widow and the orphan." Chronique du Bon Chevalier, pp. 385, 386.

[71] As a narrator, Chastellain will bear no comparison with Froissart, or, indeed, with writers much inferior to Froissart. He has no power of picturesque description, and no skill in conducting a story. His digressions are interminable, his harangues sometimes insufferably wearisome. The charm of his writings lies in his unique and magnificent diction, so thickly studded with appropriate metaphors and conceits, and still more in the completeness with which they reflect the sentiments and ideas supposed to appertain exclusively to noble birth and breeding. Froissart paints the manners and outward features of an age of chivalry; Chastellain is imbued with its spirit.

with the Princess Isabella, and in their train the celebrated painter John van Eyck, to paint a likeness of her for Philip's previous inspection.[72] The portrait proving satisfactory, and the proposal meeting with a ready assent, Isabella quitted her native shores in November, 1429, and, after a perilous voyage, landed at the Flemish port of Sluys, where she was welcomed by such a multitude of persons of every rank, that it was with difficulty a way was opened to the lodgings prepared for her, the road to which had been carpeted with fine woollen cloth. Her reception at Bruges was characterized by that magnificence which befitted the occasion and the scene. The streets through which she passed were hung with tapestry; and, as her litter made its way slowly through the press, escorted by a *cortège* comprising the members of the nobility, and all the great dignitaries, civil and ecclesiastical, of the land, even the loud braying of the trumpets, which made the whole city resonant with music, was drowned by the shouts of the spectators. The marriage festivities lasted eight days; fountains, in different parts of the town, sent forth perpetual streams of wine, both Rhenish and Burgundian; and the people celebrated the event in their usual style, by giving free indulgence to their national propensity.[73]

[72] "Lesdits ambaxadeurs, par ung nommé maistre Jehan de Eyk, varlet de chambre de mondit seigneur de Bourgoingne et excellent maistre en art de painture, firent paindre bien au vif la figure de madite dame l'Infante Elizabeth." Copie du verbal du voyaige de Portugal, &c., Gachard, Doc. Inédits, tom. ii., p. 68.

M. Gachard remarks that the biographers of John van Eyck have been unacquainted with the facts that he held the post of valet-de-chambre in the household of Philip the Good, and painted a portrait of the Princess Isabella of Portugal, which settle the much contested point of the period at which his reputation became established.

[73] Gachard, Doc. Inédits, tom. ii.,

As if to intimate the completeness with which his expectations had been realized, Philip adopted in honour of his new spouse the motto, "*Autre n'array*,"—"I will have no other,"—clearly meaning, as M. de Barante has observed, no other *wife*; for, in respect to mistresses, the genial prince imposed as little restraint upon his inclinations after his marriage as he had done before.[74] Slander even whispered that it was the charms not of his bride, but of the reigning favourite—one of Bruges's queenly beauties—that incited him to proclaim in a solemn manner his "great and perfect love for the noble state of chivalry" by creating a new order of knighthood. But this was an idle calumny. The ordinance in which the regulations of the fraternity are set forth assign as the date of its institution the 10th of

pp. 63-91.—Saint-Remy, cap. 155.—Meyer, Annales, fol. 273, 274.—Barante (ed. Gachard), tom. i., p. 505.

[74] Philip is known to have had twenty-four mistresses, and sixteen illegitimate children male and female. The daughters assumed the veil, and became prioresses, canonesses, &c. The sons were amply provided for, and formed a stately group, occupying a position not altogether in the background in the *tableau* of the Burgundian court. The second son, Antony—best known by the honourable title of "the Great Bastard of Burgundy," conferred upon him after the death of his elder brother, Cornelius—was one of the most redoubted knights and distinguished military leaders of the time, and will frequently be mentioned in the course of these pages.

Schassek informs us that, in the Netherlands, illegitimacy was not regarded as a stain. The princes and nobles maintained their mistresses publicly, and in their own houses. The offspring of these unlawful amours were educated with the children born in wedlock, and received a share of the inheritance. He deduces a conclusion favourable, in one respect, to the Flemish character; "In iis enim regionibus non sese vituperant et conviciis lacerunt, uti apud nos." Ritter-, Hof-, und Pilger-Reise, p. 28.

Duclercq is less lenient in describing the general profligacy of the higher classes. "Car lors c'estoit grande pitié que le pechié de luxure regnoit moult fort et par especial es princes et gens marriés; et estoit le plus gentil compagnon qui plus de femmes scavoit tromper et avoir au moment, qui plus luxurieulx estoit; et mesme regnoit encoires plus icelluy pechié de luxure es preslats de l'eglise et en touts gens d'eglise." Mémoires, tom. ii., p. 204.

January, 1430, the day of the duke's marriage, and allude to that event in a manner that can leave no doubt as to his motive and intention.[75] The number of the members was limited to thirty-one, and it was made incumbent upon those who were elected that they should at once resign the badge of any other order to which they belonged. The dress was originally of woollen cloth; but so simple a costume, though in accordance with the customs of chivalry, was not calculated to find favour at the Burgundian court, and was afterwards exchanged for robes of crimson velvet richly trimmed and embroidered. From the collar—composed of precious stones and pieces of gold interlinked and producing sparkles, and hence heraldically designated as "*fusils*" and "*cailloux*"—with the appropriate legend, "*Ante ferit quam flamma micat*," was suspended the fleece of gold, from which the order derived its name.[76]

The chapters were held on the day of Saint Andrew, the patron saint of Burgundy. Olivier de Lamarche has described the imposing forms, as he witnessed them for the first time, at Ghent, in 1445. The knights, attired in their robes and turbans, passed in procession through the streets, the youngest members of the order going first, and the duke, as "chief and sovereign" (for the title of "grand-master" does not seem to have been adopted), walking alone and last. At the door of the cathedral church of Saint John (now that of Saint Bavon) they were met by the canons and other clergy, and escorted to the choir, where each knight took his

is also an obvious allusion ssy sent to woo the nduct her to the Ne- title selected for the order. Isabella doubtless had her guardian dragon—or duenna.

[76] Reiffenberg, Hist. de la Toison d'Or, 4to. (Bruxelles, 1830).

seat beneath an escutcheon emblazoned with his arms and devices. Even the vacant seats of members no longer living occupied their usual places; but the arms above them were painted on a black ground.

The duke sat beneath a canopy of cloth of gold, in front of the high altar, where hung the peerless masterpiece of Van Eyck, the Adoration of the Spotless Lamb—portions of which, saved from the felonious grasp of that Spanish sovereign who sought to rob the Flemings not only of their liberty but of the productions of their genius, are still the objects of a scrupulous custody in the ancient edifice which they first adorned. After mass had been chanted by as many priests as there were members of the order, the king-at-arms, kneeling thrice before the duke, presented him with a lighted taper, and, addressing him by his different titles (Duke of Burgundy, Brabant, and Limbourg, Count of Flanders, Artois, &c.), summoned him to the offering. Each member performed the ceremony in his turn; and, when it came to that of a deceased knight, the king-at-arms assumed his place, and made the offering in his name.[77]

The business transacted in the chapters was by no means confined to matters of form. The order of the Golden Fleece had a great political significance. It was, in fact, the Burgundian sovereign's House of Peers. It did not, indeed, exercise the functions of a legislative assembly; nor was there in the Netherlands any constituent body invested with such functions. But it separated by broader lines of demarcation the most wealthy

[77] Lamarche, tom. i., p. 427, et seq.

and distinguished nobles, to whom alone the badge was given, from the other members of their class. It raised them to the position of grandees; it conferred upon them valuable and exclusive privileges. If one of them was charged with an offence against the laws, the order became a high court of judicature, before which alone he could be tried. In the perplexities of the sovereign the knights were convoked as a great council, to aid him with their advice; and such an assembly, if it had little influence in determining the course of the government, gave additional dignity to its more important acts. It was the duty of the brotherhood to reprehend a member whose life and manners were not strictly governed by the rules of knightly breeding. They performed this office even in the case of the sovereign; and we shall hereafter see the least patient of princes submitting without resentment to such reproofs, when they touched upon the most sensitive points of his character and the most glaring of his faults.[78] But if the duke, by his personal submission to its strictures, exalted the authority of the order to the highest pitch, so much the more powerful was it as an element in his dominion, and an engine of his will. It furnished him with the means of exercising a stronger influence over the whole mass of the nobility; it brought the proudest and most ambitious of his vassals into a closer connection with him, made

[78] So, too, in the sixteenth century, the Emperor Charles V., when censured by the order for his dilatory habits and his niggardliness, returned a courteous answer, excusing himself and promising amendment. In 1559 Philip II. received a reproof for disregarding the privileges of the knights, and for undertaking great affairs without asking their advice. The gloomy Spaniard made no reply; and the chapters were thenceforth discontinued. Reiffenberg, Hist. de la Toison d'Or, pp. 375, 476, 477.

them more dependent on his favour, and enabled him to maintain a closer supervision over their conduct, and to inflict no ordinary punishment upon those who had become the objects of his jealousy or dislike. The censure of the Golden Fleece carried with it a stigma that was not easily removed; but how impressive was the scene, when, after sentence of degradation had been pronounced, the king-at-arms, in the presence of the full conclave of nobles, erased the insignia of the unworthy knight, and left his escutcheon blank!

Thus Philip the Good, though not a king, occupied a position which, in the language of his eulogist, there was no king who did not envy. He ruled over the wealthiest states in Europe; he was the acknowledged head of chivalry. In the chapters of the proud order which he had created he sat like Arthur among his knights, like Charlemagne among his peers.

But his position was a strangely anomalous one. Great as was his power, he was, after all, but a vassal. He was the subject not only of the king of France, but of the emperor of Germany. In the figurative language of Chastellain, "he held the safety of France in his keeping, and the tranquillity of the Occident in his hand;" yet, by the terms of his feudal investiture, he was "the king's man," bound to serve him in the field and to attend upon him in his court. He had expelled his sovereign from the throne; he had made peace at his own discretion and on his own terms; and in the midst of his splendour, whilst sitting at the banquet of the Golden Fleece, an usher of the Parliament of Paris puts into his hand a writ which summons him to appear before that

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tribunal in person, in a suit instituted against him by one of his own subjects.[79]

His relations with the people of his different states were also of a peculiar character. He was the head of feudalism; but commerce and the arts of peace were antagonistic to feudalism, and they flourished in the Netherlands while in nearly every other part of Europe they were feeble and debased. He stood upon the border land of two different eras—he himself looking towards the past, his subjects looking towards the future. If the page of Chastellain was still illuminated by the pomp and grace of chivalry, there was at this very time growing up, under the duke's own eye, a writer who at no distant period was to touch upon such themes with caustic irony, and who, in a terse and pointed style, which the modern historian has seldom rivalled, was to commemorate the anti-chivalrous and anti-feudal reign of Louis the Eleventh.[80]

[79] "Icelui huissier gardant son exploit jusque au jour Saint-Andrieu, le jour principal de la feste de son ordre, que lui, le duc d'Orléans, et tous les chevaliers de la Toison d'or, estoient en leurs manteaux, en la gloire et solempnité de leur estat, en sale, non d'un duc par semblant, mais d'un empereur, tout prest de asseoir à table, et en point de prendre l'eau, vint icelui tout delibéré et à intencion d'esvergonder la compaignie, ne say de qui instigué ou non, et soy ruant à genoux le mandement en sa main, fit son exploit et son adjournement, ... comme pour donner à entendre: 'Vecy le flayel de vostre extollacion fière que vous avez prise, qui vous vient corrigier droit cy et pincier, et vous monstrer qui vous estes.'" Chastellain, p. xix.

He mentions the attempt of another usher to break open the prison at Lille, and liberate a prisoner who had appealed to the Parliament. Resistance was made, a disturbance followed; and the duke, who chanced to be in the town, came up, attended by several of his suite. He looked on, however, in silence, until the people prepared to throw the officer into the river—a catastrophe which Philip prevented, "pour révérence du roy."

[80] Among the French chroniclers and memoir-writers the name of Philippe de Commines stands pre-eminent. He is the first in order (as well as in rank) of the modern authors

Nowhere, too, did Philip's sway rest upon that old hereditary right, which, in an age when a political

of this class—not, as some critics assert, the last of an earlier race. With the deepest respect for Dr. Arnold's extensive scholarship, and reverence for his character, we venture to think his notion, that the Memoirs of Commines exemplify the complete unconsciousness of his generation in regard to its position while standing on the very verge of a new era, singularly incorrect. "The knell of the Middle Ages," he remarks, "has been already sounded, yet Commines has no other notions than such as they had tended to foster." It is true that Commines did not foresee the Reformation and the consequent rise of popular power and popular institutions; nor do his comments and digressions partake of the character of philosophical disquisition. But no philosopher, standing aloof from the affairs and movements of the age, could have more thoroughly appreciated the decay which was at work in its political customs and institutions, the transfer of political power into new hands, and its transition into a new form. He exhibits the workings and the influence of that system of policy of which Machiavelli was the first to expound the principles and the theory. The evidence that he represents the progress and the transitional character of the period at which he wrote is to be found in his covert or open contempt for actions, sentiments, and ideas regarded by most of his contemporaries with a serious admiration; in his perception of the true functions of government, of the mutual relations of the different European powers, and of the importance of diplomacy; in his emphatic praise of the English constitution and discernment of its peculiar features; in his abandonment of the Burgundian court and devotion to the service of Louis XI.; in the nature and purpose of his work, and even in the characteristics of his style, so little coloured with the richly tinted phraseology of the time, so free from its pedantry and prolixity, so clear, masculine, and chastened by the precision and *netteté* of the best modern French prose.

One phrase which he has employed is frequently cited, but not, we think, with a right conception of its sense. The distinguished author of the "Rise of the Dutch Republic," in the Introduction to that admirable work, speaks of "authors like Olivier de Lamarche and Philippe de Commines, who, in the language of the latter, 'wrote not for the amusement of brutes, and people of low degree, but for princes and other persons of quality.'" Thus, by translating *bestes* "brutes," *simples gens* "people of low degree," and *gens de cour* "persons of quality," Commines, who never misses an occasion of sneering at the ignorance of the nobility—Commines, the eulogist and *protégé* of Louis XI., of the monarch, that is to say, who degraded the royal office (according to the estimation of the age) by choosing his servants and favourites from the meanest class, and by habitually and systematically disregarding the pretensions of birth—is represented as the champion of aristocracy, and as having compiled his Memoirs with the view of providing entertainment for high-born gentlemen and ladies. But the meaning of the historian is very different. He has

system was moulded into shape by circumstance and time, formed the firmest basis of authority. In none of his states was he the lineal representative, through male heirs, of their ancient princes. In some of them he sat upon the uneasy throne of a conqueror. But, for the most part, the house of Burgundy owed its aggrandizement, like the house of Habsburg, to its matrimonial alliances; and its acquisitions went at last, with those of the house of Habsburg, to swell the dominions of a monarchy which had itself been consolidated by the same means, and which, in the sixteenth century, threatened to absorb the larger part of the European continent.

been saying that he does not relate the particulars of a certain transaction for the purpose of casting reproach upon the parties concerned, but because he has undertaken to give a faithful narrative of the events with which he is acquainted; "and," he adds—as a reason why he should enter into such details—"I do not count upon these memoirs being read by the *ignorant*, or by persons in *private stations*; but I think they will furnish *good hints* to princes and *court-people*" (*i. e.*, official persons, who have to deal with such matters). In short, Commines, instead of classing himself with Lamarche and similar writers, intended to distinguish himself from them: *their* books, stuffed with descriptions of pageants and tournaments, were written for the amusement of idle people, not over-furnished with brains, unacquainted with the internal springs of policy and little interested in their operations; *his* book was meant as a manual for statesmen, and was dedicated to Angelo Cato, one of the most learned men of the age, with a view to its being translated into Latin and enriched by additional particulars gathered from other sources. That Commines used the word *bête* in its ordinary signification (denoting obtuseness and ignorance, not the brutality of the *canaille*) will be apparent from a citation not inapposite on other accounts. Speaking of the want of knowledge and contempt for learning so commonly manifested by feudal princes, "God," he says, "did not establish the office of king, or ruler howsoever entitled, to be exercised by the *bestes*, nor by such as out of vainglory say, 'I am no clerk; I leave all to my council; I trust to them.'"

M. Kervyn de Letterhove, quoting the same passage as Mr. Motley, and putting the same construction upon it, thus sharpens the supposed antithesis: "Il méprisa fort les *bestes* et *simples gens*: il n'écrit que pour les *rois*." (Bulletins de l'Acad. de Brux. 1859, p. 278.) Had M. Kervyn ever read the remarks of Commines on "la *bestialité* des *princes* et leur *ignorance*," in the 18th chapter of the 5th book, and elsewhere?

Philip the Good ruled, in fact, over a heterogeneous aggregate of states. His authority over each rested on a distinct title, and was exercised by distinct methods. No two of them had precisely the same laws, the same customs, or the same national history. The provinces did not constitute a country, and the inhabitants did not constitute a people. In the Netherlands two dissimilar races dwelt side by side; two totally different languages were spoken; and each so tenaciously maintained its ancient hold, that, in a single city, neither was able to gain an inch of ground, and they have preserved their respective limits down to the present day.

Nor did Philip's states even constitute a group, enclosed within a common boundary. The two Burgundies were separated from the Netherlands by Alsace and by Lorraine. When he travelled from one part of his dominions to another, he was obliged to pass over foreign territory. If the ruler of that territory were hostile to him, he could perform his journey only at the head of an army. In time of war his presence would have been equally necessary at Dijon and at Brussels. But, in such a case, he was liable to be cut off from the states which furnished him with money, or from those which furnished him with men.

Out of these elements would it have been possible to form a monarchy? Philip the Good never made the attempt. He was wont to assert that he had more than once refused the title of "king"—and it is at least certain that intimations from the imperial court, pointing in this direction, had been suffered to pass without any response. In spite of his early hostility to France, he gloried in his French extraction and in his nearness to the throne—in his precedence at the court, in his privi-

leges as the "premier peer" of France, in his right to place the crown with his own hands upon the king's head, and to be the first to do homage to him and to promise him obedience. He himself was far from regarding his position as strange. To conquer province after province, to accumulate power and wealth, seemed to him natural efforts of ambition. But to take that one step further which would have conducted him to independent sovereignty, to find some stronger bond of union than the slender and accidental tie by which he had bound one acquisition with another, to overturn an existing system and to establish a new one in its place —this was not the object of an ambition such as his.

Yet there was everything in such a project to kindle the ambition of one who occupied the place of Philip and possessed the same resources. To remove obsolete institutions, to substitute political order for political chaos, is the proper task of an able and aspiring statesman. To round the limits of his empire, and secure its integrity, must be the first and strongest desire of a warlike prince. If the right of appeal to the Parliament of Paris were cut off, Flanders would cease in all but the name to be a part of France. If the interlying provinces were annexed, Burgundy and the Netherlands would be united. If the sovereign were invested with the regal dignity, the consolidation of his dominions might be expected to follow as a necessary consequence. There had been an ancient kingdom of Burgundy, extending from the Vosges to the Mediterranean: why not a modern kingdom of Burgundy, extending from the Alps to the German Ocean?

This project was not long to remain unconceived or unattempted. It was an idea well suited to a prince

bold in character, stubborn of purpose, warlike in disposition, incited to great attempts not merely by the love of fame, but by the instincts and energies of his nature. Such was not the character of Philip; and him, therefore, this idea did not captivate and possess. But it was to be the dream—the splendid, the vain, the fatal dream—of Philip's successor.

CHAPTER III.

THE HEIR OF BURGUNDY. — THE HEIR OF FRANCE. — ACCESSION OF LOUIS XI.

1433—1461.

Dijon, the ancient capital of Burgundy, stands at the confluence of two rivers and at the entrance of a vast but sheltered and fertile plain. Seen from the vine-clad elevations of the Côte d'Or, it wears an aspect of peculiar sternness — a group of massive structures casting frowns upon a smiling landscape. Though it had ceased under the house of Valois to be the ordinary residence of the dukes, it was still regarded as their home. Here all save the first of the line were born; here all save the last of the line were buried. Just outside the walls stood the family mausoleum — a great Carthusian convent, raised by Philip the Bold, the founder of the dynasty; and in the heart of the town, enclosed within buildings of more recent date, a single tower of the old ducal palace may still be found which was the birthplace of John the Fearless, of Philip the Good, and of the prince with whom this dynasty became extinct.[1]

Charles of Burgundy was born on the 10th of November, 1433.[2] The earlier offspring of the Duchess

[1] Lacuisine, Esquisses Dijonnais, Mém. de l'Acad. de Dijon, 1845, p. 112.—Courtépée, tom. ii., pp. 83, 126.

[2] As this was the Vigil of Saint Martin, he received the baptismal appellation of "Charles Martin." But

Isabella had died in infancy. Her third, and, as it proved, her last child, was therefore an object of especial tenderness and care; and, contrary to the usage of women of exalted rank, his mother nourished him from her own breast. In his case, however, any excess of maternal solicitude might safely have been dispensed with. Far from being a weakling, the boy had been endowed by nature with a constitution of extraordinary vigour.

On the day of his baptism he was invested with the order of the Golden Fleece and with the title of Count of Charolais.[3] Before he was two years old his mother removed with him to the Netherlands, where, as soon as he had reached a suitable age, he was placed under the care of a nobleman distinguished for the integrity and decorum of his life, to be trained in the habits and accomplishments that were thought to befit an illustrious station.

The lord of Auxy found himself intrusted with no light or easy charge. The vehement temper of the young count gave early and constant proof that the blood of his paternal ancestors flowed in his veins with undiminished impetuosity.[4] Yet the strength of the current was not indicated merely by its violence. He displayed a persistency of will that seemed to mark

the second name seems never to have been used. Had Luther, who was born on the same anniversary just half a century later (1483), been the son not of a peasant, but of a prince, the saint's name, bestowed upon him according to a common Catholic custom, would have been forgotten in some lordlier prefix.

[3] The county of Charolais, an arrière-fief of Burgundy, was reserved as an appanage for the heir to the duchy. It had been purchased by Philip the Bold.

[4] Or, as Lamarche euphuistically expresses it, "Il estoit chaud, actif, et despit, et desiroit en sa condition enfantine à faire ses voulontez à petites corrections." Mémoires, tom. ii., p. 62.

him out as one destined for laborious undertakings. His power of application was remarkable; and he acquired a much larger share of the learning of the age than was commonly possessed by persons of noble birth. But the works of the Latin authors — which he is said to have been able to read and understand without the aid of commentaries[5] — failed at first to interest his mind in the same degree as the romances of chivalry.[6] These, it is true, were but ideal pictures; but they idealized the life which came under his own observation and in which he was to bear a conspicuous part; and his was a mind that dreamed of realities, and panted for action.

When he was eighteen years of age he took his degree in what then constituted the most important branch of education — horsemanship and the use of the lance — by jousting in public with that consummate master of martial exercises, Jacques de Lalain. The duchess, who could seldom be induced to be present on such occasions, witnessed the encounter, and trembled with apprehension at the moment of the shock. Philip, however, laughed at her fears, and saw with complacency the proofs of skill and courage given by his son. "The mother," says a chronicler, "thought only of safety, the father only of honour."[7] To Charles himself the tilting-field was not a place for idle display, but a school of

[5] Barlandus, De Carolo Burgundo (Francofurti, 1585), p. 298.—Jaeger remarks that there was no scholar of that age in respect to whom such a statement could be received without qualification. Geschichte Carls des Kühnen (Nürnberg, 1795), p. 27. — "Il apprenoit à l'escole moult bien, . . . et retenoit ce qu'il avoit ouy, mieux qu'autre de son aage." La-marche, tom. ii., p. 62.

[6] "S'appliquoit à lire et faire lire devant luy du commencement les joyeux comptes et faicts de Lancelot et de Gauvain." Idem, loc. cit.

[7] "De ce coup ne fut pas la duchesse contente dudict Messire Jacques: mais le bon duc s'en rioit. . . . L'un desiroit l'epreuve et l'autre la seureté." Idem, tom. ii., p. 60.

arms. He became a "rude jouster," demeaning himself in the lists like a poor knight hoping to win favour and fortune by his valour, rather than like a prince conscious of admiring glances and secure of easy triumphs.[8]

The rebellion of Ghent, which broke out in 1452, gave him an opportunity of displaying his prowess in enterprises of greater peril. Even Philip would fain have spared his son so early an acquaintance with the hazards of war. But the count swore by Saint George —his common and only oath—that he would go in his doublet rather than not accompany his father to take vengeance on his rebellious subjects. In the encounters which took place he displayed the headstrong valour of a young soldier mingled with the peculiar obstinacy of his race. He distinguished himself in the battle of Gavre by cutting his way through a body of Flemings, and relieving his father, who had been surrounded, from imminent peril. Having been sent with a party of troops to surprise the town of Moerbeke, he found the place strongly defended and prepared for the attack. The veteran captains by whom he was accompanied were unable to convince him that the project must be abandoned. "At least," he exclaimed, "let us not retreat; let us lie here to-night in face of the enemy, and wait for artillery and reinforcements." And when overruled in this, he could not refrain from tears of angry disappointment.[9]

By one of the provisions of the treaty of Arras the Count of Charolais had been betrothed to a daughter of

[8] "Non pas seulement comme un prince ou un signeur, mais comme un chevalier dur, puissant, et à doubter, . . . comme si c'eust esté un pauvre compaignon, qui desirast son avancement à ce mestier." Idem, tom. ii., p. 156.

[9] "Dont il larmoyoit de depit et de courage." Idem, tom. ii., p. 113.

Charles the Seventh. The lady, however, died before the marriage could be consummated. Philip then selected as his son's bride another French princess, a daughter of the Duke of Bourbon. But the count, influenced by his mother, manifested a repugnance to this match. The duchess, who was descended on the maternal side from the royal house of England, was strongly desirous that her son should ally himself with that family. The duke, on the contrary, regarded his old allies only with feelings of aversion, while his loyalty to his own sovereign seemed to be strengthened by the recollections of their former enmity. He summoned Charles into his presence, and sternly commanded him to lay aside all thoughts of such a marriage. Though circumstances had compelled him, in early life, to connect himself with the enemies of France, he had never, he said, "been English at heart;" and he menaced his son with banishment and disinheritance in case of further resistance. "As for this bastard," he added, turning towards one of his natural sons, whom he suspected of having encouraged the count in his opposition, "if I find that he counsels you to set yourself against my wishes, I will have him tied up in a sack and thrown into the sea." [10]

Charles's marriage with Isabella of Bourbon took place in 1454. Though a reluctant bridegroom, he became strongly attached to his wife; and his treatment of her during their union, which lasted eleven years, was such as gave her no cause for complaint. In a dissolute age, and at a court where the sovereign himself set an

[10] Duclercq, tom. ii., p. 203. — He asserts that the marriage took place on the same day, and adds, "Par le commandement très exprès du duc, Charles coucha icelle nuict avec sa femme."

example of open licentiousness, the Count of Charolais presented what was certainly a rare, if not the only, instance of marital fidelity.[11] His faults, indeed, were not such as arise from an inordinate love of pleasure. He ate sparingly and of the simplest food, and seldom tasted wine unless diluted with a much larger proportion of water. "His pleasure was not in luxury and self-indulgence," says the chronicler, "but in labour and endurance."[12] He hardened himself by constant exercise and exposure. He excelled in manly sports — in archery and in throwing the bar. He was seldom absent when the chase was proclaimed in the forest of Soignies, and delighted especially in the dangerous pastime of hunting the wild boar. But on the coast of Holland, which he often visited, he found still stronger attractions in the pursuit in which so large a number of the inhabitants were engaged — frequenting the ocean even in the stormiest weather, and making himself practically acquainted with the art of seamanship in its minutest details.[13]

In the ordinary intercourse of society his manners were courteous but reserved. Pomp and state he regarded as essential qualities of a princely life; but he had little relish for the gaieties and excesses of his father's court. He shared, however, in its more refined tastes, and took part in its more graceful recreations. He

[11] "La quelle depuis il aima tant que c'estoit belle chose de la belle vie touchant marriage qu'ils menoient, et disoient pour vray, que pour rien icelluy Charles n'eust allé a aultre femme que la sienne." Idem, p. 204. —He mentions the fact as extraordinary. And see, to the same effect, Chastellain, p. 509, and Lamarche, ("Jamais ne rompit son mariage: ny ne le sceu oncque de luy, ne d'assez suffisans pour ouir parler de tels secrets,") tom. ii. p. 157.

[12] "N'estoit enclin à nulles molesses ne lascivetés: estoit tout à labeur et à dur." Chastellain, p. 509.

[13] Lamarche, tom. i. p. 179, and tom. ii. pp. 62, 156, et al.

was a good dancer, and was reputed to be the most skilful chess-player of his time. For music he had a strong partiality, cultivating the science, so far as it could be said to exist, and composing motets, chansons, and other fashionable strains.[14]

Though somewhat below the common height, Charles had a powerful frame. His shoulders were broad and full, his limbs muscular and firmly knit. He was insensible to fatigue, and wore his armour as if he had been born in it.[15] "I never heard him complain of weariness," says Philippe de Commines, "and never saw in him a sign of fear."[16] In countenance he bore little

[14] Idem, ubi supra.—Chastellain.

It may be as well, at the outset, to warn such readers as have gathered their impressions of the events and personages of this period from the pages of Scott, that in none of his creations has the great master handled his brush with so careless a hand, and laid on his colours with so little discrimination, as in "Quentin Durward." Leaving out of view the anachronisms and other deviations from historical truth (which yet are seldom defensible, inasmuch as not merely the facts of history, but the features of the age, are thereby distorted and discoloured), the portraitures of character are commonplace conceptions coarsely executed. He attributes to Charles the Bold precisely those vices from which he was altogether free — representing him as a drunkard and a gross feeder, as dull in his perceptions and vulgar in his tastes, as seasoning his phrases with oaths, and laughing boisterously at any coarse jest or piece of low buffoonery. The faults of Charles were sufficiently glaring, and scarcely admitted of exaggeration; but his breeding had been that of a prince, not of a boor, his education had been better than that of other princes of his time, his tastes and habits were more, not less, refined than theirs, and the restraint he imposed upon his sensual appetites was as conspicuous a trait as his sternness and violence.

[15] "Estoit (ce sembloit) né en fer, tant l'aimoit: se délectoit en armes et en champs floris de harnas." Chastellain, p. 509.—"Il portoit ordinairement [ses armes] sans distinction de temps, chalereux ou froid, car en l'un et en l'autre il trauailloit équalement, sans pouuoir succomber à la peine." Gollut, col. 1313.

[16] "Deux choses plus je dirai de luy: l'une est, que je croye que jamais nul homme ne print plus de travail que luy, en tous endroictz où il fault exerciter la personne: l'autre, que à mon advis je ne congneuz oncques homme plus hardy. Je ne luy ouys oncques dire qu'il fust las, ny ne luy veiz jamais faire semblant d'avoir paour: et si ay esté sept annees de reng en la guerre avec luy,

resemblance to his father—the full, red mouth being the only distinctive feature which they had in common. His face was somewhat round; his complexion a transparent olive, tinted with a ruddy glow. A wavy mass of thick, black hair overhung his forehead, and flowed around his neck. In walking, his looks were habitually directed towards the ground; but his eyes were "angelically clear," their glances equally penetrating and expressive, and in moments of excitement terrible. The tones of his voice were agreeable and distinct. He was gifted with a natural eloquence, sometimes impeded at the outset by the ardour of his temperament, but becoming, as he proceeded, not less logical than vehement.[17]

It is hardly necessary that we should sketch even the outlines of Charles's character, so plainly does it reveal itself in the most meagre narrative of his life. There are no subtleties to be explored, no strange contradictions to be reconciled. Fiery and inflexible; proud, impatient, melancholy; implacable in his enmities, in his judgments rigorous but just; subject to gusts of passion that settled into a sullen fixedness of purpose by which flattery and counsel were alike repelled; ever brooding on the future or battling stormfully with the present, Charles the Bold, the Rash, the Warlike,

l'esté pour le moins, et en aucunes l'yver et l'esté." Commines, tom. i. p. 51.

[17] "Portoit bonnes jambes et grosses cuisses, longue main et gent pied, . . . un peu grossettes espaules: . . . avoit tournure de visage un peu plus ronde que le père, mais estoit de clair brun: avoit uns yeux vairs et rians, et angeliquement clairs; . . . avoit la bouche du père grossette et vermeille: . . . portoit un vif teint, clair brun, beau front et noire chevelure espesse et houssue, blanc col et bien assis, et en marchant regardoit vers terre. . . . Avoit faconde; telle fois fut en commencement de sa raison empeschié à la bouter dehors: mais mis en train fut très éloquent. Avoit beau son et clair: . . . estoit sage et discret de soh parler, orné et compassé en ses raisons beaucoup plus que le père." Chastellain, p. 509.

the Terrible (for all these epithets were applied to him either in his lifetime or by the generation immediately succeeding), is portrayed on the canvas of history in lines and colours which the feeblest copyist cannot fail to seize. It was thought by those who knew him in his youth, and who were perhaps misled by his meditative habits, that he had no strong inclination to a military career. But his first experience in arms aroused a passion that was never afterwards to slumber.[18] All the natural desires of youth were consumed by the intense flames of his ambition. It is related of him, at this period, that every night, after retiring to bed, he caused one of his attendants to read aloud some stirring passage of ancient history; and, as he listened to the exploits of Alexander, it may have been that he was secretly elated by the recollection that he too was the son of Philip.[19]

In the autumn of 1456, while the duke was absent in Holland, there arrived at the court of Brussels a fugitive from France. This person will occupy a place in our

[18] Commines assigns a later date—that of the battle of Montlhéry—as the period when this passion was first developed.—"Estoit tres inutile pour la guerre paravant ce jour, et n'aymoit nulle chose qui y appartinst." (Mémoires, tom. i. p. 50.)—But Commines did not become a member of Charles's household till some years after the War of Ghent, in which, according to other accounts, the ardent courage exhibited by the count was not more conspicuous than his attention to military discipline.

[19] In the rude, but often highly vigorous, ballads which celebrate the victories of the Swiss and their Alsatian allies, Charles is often taunted with aspiring to imitate the career of Alexander. For example:—

"So muss man in des grossen alexanders legend lesen,
Als ob er meint sin gelichs wesen."

Chronik des Kaplans Johannes Knebel, 2te Abth. s. 220 (Bemerkungen). A more explicit and authoritative intimation to the like effect occurs in a letter written by a Flemish nobleman in 1473. "Hujus rei [the exploits of Alexander] præcipua admiratione, qui curas studiaque sua interius norunt, aiunt ipsum teneri." Lenglet du Fresnoy, Mém. de Commines, avec un Recueil de Traités, Lettres, Contrats et Instructions (4 vols. 4to., Londres, 1747), tom. iii. p. 261.

pages hardly less conspicuous than that of Charles. His character, however, will be far more difficult to depict. Easy of access, communicative and familiar, he seems to invite us to an unreserved intimacy, and to lay himself open to our inspection. But so mobile are the features, so shifting and dubious is the expression, that the portrait, we may fear, will remain a perplexing study to the last.

It has been mentioned in a former chapter that the measures by which Charles the Seventh succeeded in restoring some degree of order in his dominions excited the discontent of many of the nobles. The chief embarrassment of the insurgents arose out of the difficulty of finding a leader of sufficient eminence to attract the people to their standard. The Duke of Burgundy, who had but lately made a treaty with the king, declined to give the movement his support. In this emergency, those who had set the enterprise on foot turned their eyes upon the heir to the crown.

Louis had then barely completed his seventeenth year. His boyhood had been very unlike that of most princes. At the time of his birth his father was living at Bourges, in the condition of an exile rather than in that of a king. So slender was the appearance of royal state preserved at his court, that his chamber was open at all hours to the meanest officer of his army.[20] While his vassal the Duke of Burgundy surpassed the greatest monarchs in Europe in the splendour of his way of life, Charles the Seventh invited his captains to a plain though wholesome dinner, consisting of a leg of mutton and a pair of fowls.[21] When the prince was christened, the funds in the royal

1440.

[20] Lamarche, tom. i. p. 286.

[21] Vigiles de Charles VII.

treasury were insufficient to pay the chaplain his fee. The wet-nurse, a "poor woman of Bourges," received several years afterwards, in lieu of pension, a gratuity of fifteen livres;[22] and, when Louis had arrived at an age at which he was entitled to a purse for his private pleasures, his allowance was fixed at ten crowns a month.

Too early an exposure to hardships and mortifications affects differently different minds so far as moral qualities are concerned. But it seldom fails to stimulate the development of the intellectual faculties. Louis, indeed, possessed a mind that must have ripened early in any atmosphere. He had an intuitive perception of his proper field of action, a happy confidence in his own powers, and a boundless desire to exert them. He was often betrayed by the subtlety and nimbleness of his intellect, seldom by the vivacity of his passions. Of the softer feelings of the heart he was acquainted with the external signs, and his mastery over these became in time one of his most useful accomplishments; while he also learned, but with less facility, how foolish, how dangerous it was, to hate.[23]

At seventeen, therefore, he was no longer a boy. Three years earlier, at the siege of Montereau, he had made his first essay in arms; and, in the intervening period, he had been actively engaged in assisting to exterminate the freebooters who were devastating the country. He readily listened to the overtures of the

[22] Duclos, Hist. de Louis XI. (Amsterdam, 1766), tom. iii. (Preuves) p. 3.—Petitot, Mém. de Commines, Introduction.

[23] "Comme il se trouva grant et roy couronné, d'entree ne pensa que aux vengeances; mais tost luy en vint le dommaige, et quant et quant la repentance. Et repara *ceste follye et ceste erreur*." Commines, tom. i. p. 85.

disaffected nobles. He was not in the least embarrassed by scruples in regard to making war upon his father. He perfectly appreciated the propriety of his taking the management of affairs of state out of the weak hands of an indolent monarch. With his brisk intellect, his active habits, his innate love of work, how easy would be the task of driving the remnant of the English from the country, and restoring the pristine glory of France![24]

But, keen as were his instincts, Louis was still deficient in that sagacity which the most happily constituted mind can acquire only by experience. His overeagerness was destined to lead him into many and serious difficulties, from which no mortal less dexterous than he could have escaped, before he learned that most important of all lessons for the aspiring mind, to wait. Charles the Seventh had been indolent while forced to submit to the dictation of advisers whose incapacity was the object of his careless contempt.[25] But he was now surrounded by ministers of his own choice, and he was prosecuting enterprises both military and political with vigour and success. He scattered the elements of the revolt before they had time to coalesce. One after another the rebellious nobles made terms with the king,

[24] "Ipse vero qui juvenis et animosus foret . . . facile talibus incommodis obviaret . . . remque publicam, prorsus dilapsam atque prope exstinctam, sua vigilantia et industria brevi tempore instauraret, et publicis ejectis hostibus, regnum ipsum ad priscam dignitatis suæ ac decoris gratiam atque opulentiam revocaret." Basin, tom. i. p. 136.

[25] What Macaulay has said of Charles II. of England—that "he was a slave without being a dupe"—would have been equally applicable, in his earlier days, to Charles VII. of France. He submitted without the slightest expression of annoyance to the control of persons for whom he had neither affection nor respect. "My cousin," he said to the Constable de Richmont, —who, when the king demurred to an appointment, assured him of the rare talents and excellent qualities of the person promoted,—"it is you who make the appointment, and *you* will repent of it: I know him better than you do"—as turned out to have been the case.

and returned to their allegiance. In the course of a few months Louis was astonished at finding himself abandoned by all save a few of his own followers—the persons who had been placed about him by Charles, and who had been guilty of a double treason in seducing the prince from his duty. They had no chance of obtaining mercy except through the intercession of Louis. They sent him, therefore, to the king, to solicit their pardon and his own. Charles accorded to his son the cold forgiveness of one who did not choose to punish, but who knew that a gracious and generous reception would be wasted upon such an offender. The petition of Louis in behalf of his adherents was rejected with disdain. In this case, the prince said, he was bound in honour to return to them, and share their fate. "Louis," replied the king with his accustomed *sang-froid*, "you have come of your own accord; you are equally free to depart. If the gate be not wide enough to afford you a passage, I will have fifteen or twenty yards of the wall taken down." [26] Such an answer could not fail to make the intended impression upon the discriminating mind of the person to whom it was addressed.

It was plain, however, that this unquiet spirit could be kept in subjection only by continual employment. He was sent into Normandy, where a desultory warfare was then going on, some of the strong places being still occupied by the English garrisons. Louis was not endowed with that peculiar combination of talents which constitutes the genius of the great commander. But his boldness and alacrity gave a stimulus to the operations of the French, which were everywhere crowned with success. He was afterwards placed at

[26] Monstrelet, tom. vii. p. 8[illegible]

the head of an army which the king had been induced by his Austrian allies to send against the Swiss; and, though his exploits on this occasion were of a somewhat questionable character, he sustained no reverses and even gained a memorable victory over a valiant but too confident enemy.

But no sooner had he been recalled to the court, than he again began to plot against the sovereign whom he had served with so much zeal and efficiency. It was impossible for him to comprehend that insuperable obstacles existed to his obtaining at once the opportunity for which he longed of exhibiting his ability to manage the affairs of France. He tampered with the fidelity of the Scottish body-guard, and opened his treasonable projects to the celebrated Antony de Chabanne, Count of Dammartin, one of the most trusted of Charles's captains. The design of Louis was to make himself master of his father's person, and to take the government into his own hands. He spoke of his arrangements with a coolness remarkable in the subject, admirable in the son. "I must be on the spot myself," he remarked to Dammartin, "for the others will be awed in the presence of the king; but, if I am there to direct them, all will go well."[27] The same tone of candour and simplicity marked the rest of the communication, of which the favoured recipient lost no time in unburdening himself. Several of the inferior persons concerned in the conspiracy were executed. But Charles, though he perfectly understood

[27] "Se fera bien la chose, et y veux être en personne, car chacun craint la personne du Roi quand on le voit; et quand je n'y seroye en personne, je doute que le cœur ne faillit à mes gens, quand ils le verroient, et en ma présence chacun fera ce que je voudrai, et tout se fera bien." Déposition de Dammartin, Duclos, tom. iii. p. 54.

his son's character, and was little disposed to be the victim of his own paternal tenderness, had not the stern temper of a Philip the Second or a Peter the Great. Instead, therefore, of putting the prince to death or shutting him up in a prison, he committed to him the government of Dauphiné.

This province had already been bestowed upon Louis as an appanage, and the estates had granted him a considerable yearly income. He was now invested with the administration of its affairs subject only to such restrictions as were necessary to preserve the authority of the crown. To these restrictions he gave not the slightest heed. Dauphiné became to him a lesser France, where he exercised the power and assumed the prerogatives of an independent sovereign. He made wars and treaties with his neighbours; and, like one who having newly come into possession of a crown thinks it incumbent on him to provide for its peaceable transmission, he prepared to form a matrimonial alliance, and offered his hand to a daughter of the Duke of Savoy.

Louis was already a widower. At the age of thirteen he had been married to Margaret of Scotland, a daughter of James the First. Thanks to some "touches of nature," which, in spite of its authenticity, have ensured its frequent repetition, few passages in the *chronique scandaleuse* of those times are better known than the mournful story of this young princess—a noble creature, full of intellect, enthusiasm, and quick but generous impulses; loving poetry,[28] tales of heroism,

[28] It is told of her, that, finding Alain Chartier, the poet and royal secretary, asleep in a chair, she stooped and kissed his mouth—"for the fine words that had come from it," as she explained to her astonished attendants. Michelet complains that there is little in Alain's poetry to prove him de-

and kindly, intelligent conversation; transplanted from her bleak northern hills to a warmer but less congenial soil; and ill-mated with a boy man of the world, precocious in his keen perception of the practical aims of life; in his total lack of generous sentiment, and in his power of bruising every tender spot in those with whom he came in contact.

Margaret was twelve years old when brought to France—a year younger than the dauphin. She lived only to the age of twenty, beloved, we are told, by both king and queen, and worshipped, as we can plainly discern in the documents relating to her fate, by the younger ladies of the court. Shortly before her death venomous whispers began to be breathed against her—vague hints and innuendoes, for which a certain unconventional but innocent freedom of manners, perhaps withal, as often happens in such cases, the very nobleness of her nature, furnished the incentive and the pretext. She would sit up half or all the night making ballads and *rondeaux*,—an amusement of which she was passionately fond,—sometimes not going to bed "till my lord the dauphin had finished his first two naps," sometimes even not till dawn. Jamet de Tillay, bailiff of Vermandois, who held some post in the royal household, coming into her apartment one evening "about nine o'clock," found her lying on a couch, conversing with Messire de Blainville, who leaned upon the couch, and with another gentleman; neither torch nor candle burning, but "a good fire," which sent forth a cheerful,

serving of the kiss. Another anecdote, not less characteristic, is related of Margaret. At a tournament, she turned her glance from the more showy cavaliers to a poor knight whose shabby equipments served as a foil to the surrounding splendour, and generously presented him with three hundred crowns from her own slenderly furnished purse.

though, as it would seem, indecorous, light. Her female attendants were present; but De Tillay, shocked at this violation of the proprieties in so immaculate a court, rebuked in coarse and insolent terms the officer whose duty it was to have seen that lights were provided, warning him of the scandal that might arise from such neglect—"Madame being a foreigner."[29]

So much was acknowledged by the slanderer,—shooting his poisoned arrow under the pretence of protecting her from slander,—when questioned, after Margaret's death, as to the language in which he had spoken of her; as, also, that he had, at various times and to various persons, insinuated the improbability of her bearing children. But these expressions he explained away as of harmless import; and other phrases, which admitted of no such interpretation, he stoutly denied, affirming "on the damnation of his soul" that he had never uttered a syllable against the honour of the princess, and offering, if his accuser were a man, to support the denial with his sword. But the depositions of several witnesses, male and female, including the queen herself, established the fact that De Tillay had not only, in direct though general terms, charged Margaret with looseness of behaviour, but had endeavoured, by an Iago-like method, to instil jealous suspicions into the mind of the queen.[30]

[29] Interrogatoire de Jamet de Tillay, Duclos, tom. iii. pp. 34, 47.

[30] The queen's testimony is confined to a curious conversation she had held with De Tillay when the court was about removing from Chalons. He informed her that the king thought it best, on account of her delicate situation, that she should travel by slow stages; that she was to set out first, and the dauphiness was to remain behind, and go with the king. All this was communicated in a manner to suggest a different motive from the one assigned. The queen, however, refrained from exhibiting any emotion, and agreed to the proposal of De Tillay that she should conform to the arrange-

The part played by Louis in this obscure affair seems to have been a purely negative one. He does not, in fact, make his appearance on the stage at all. But his shadow falls for a moment ominously on the background. "There was no one in the world of whom she stood in such dread as of my lord the dauphin," was Margaret's remark to one of her ladies,[31] when passionately complaining of the speeches by which "that valiant officer," as she ironically called De Tillay, had endeavoured to blast her reputation. She seems to have regarded this person with mingled fear and abhorrence. Going one evening to recite her vespers in the queen's oratory, she caught the sound of his voice in the chamber, where he was "flouting, as was his custom," with one of the women, and started back as if a snake had crossed her path.[32]

In the midst of her troubles Death came beneficently to her relief. She was taken ill at Chalons, after walking one hot day, from the bishop's palace, where the court was then staying, to 1445.

ment without further parley, and should make her preparations for departure. When she spoke to her *maître d'hôtel*, he expressed his disbelief in the statements of De Tillay; and it was found, on inquiry, that no such plan had been proposed.

[31] Commines, writing more than half a century later, but receiving the traditions of the French court through the purest channels, asserts that Louis was married to Margaret against his will, and never ceased to feel regret while she lived. Mémoires, tom. ii. p. 274.

[32] "Incontinent elle s'en retourna tout court, sans dire mot, et s'en yssit dudit retrait, et tantôt elle qui parle s'en alla après madite Dame." Déposition de Jeanne de Tasse, Duclos, tom. iii. p. 21.

Margaret inquired what De Tillay had been talking about, and explained her agitation by saying that it was he who had endeavoured to deprive her of the favour of the king and of her husband. Some days later she told the same witness that "the valiant man had begun to shake," that he had sent to request an interview with her in order to excuse himself. "But I know well," she added, "that he spoke *the words*, and those who reported them are ready to assert it before his face."

say her prayers in the cathedral. The physicians found their medicines of no avail, and declared—what was evident enough to all—that she "had some grief upon her heart," and that this and her long vigils were shortening her days. In her last moments she talked piteously of the wrongs that had brought her to so early a grave, and of her regret that she had ever quitted Scotland.[33] Striking her breast, "I take God and my baptism to witness," she exclaimed, "that I have never been guilty of any wrong to my lord." After her confession, one of her ladies suggested that some persuasion should be used to induce her to say that she forgave De Tillay. The priest remarked that she had already done so. "No, no," she cried out from her bed, "I have not forgiven him, I have not forgiven him;" and continued to repeat the same words till told that, unless she forgave every one, she could not hope to be herself forgiven. "Well, then," she said, "I pardon him," and added, "from my heart." Some one endeavoured to cheer her with hopes of life. "Fie upon life!" she replied; "talk to me of it no more."[34]

Margaret was at least fortunate in her early death. And this was also a fortunate event for Louis. The contiguity of his dominions with those of her father rendered Charlotte of Savoy a peculiarly eligible match for him—so obviously eligible that he deemed it altogether unnecessary to consult the king before making his proposals. When these had been accepted, and an early day appointed for the marriage, he gave notice to Charles

[33] Brezé,—grand seneschal of Normandy and Poitou, and the ablest as well as honestest of Charles's ministers,—who was present and heard her, exclaimed with indignation, "Ah! faux et mauvais Ribault, elle meurt par toi!"

[34] See the depositions of the attendants, Duclos, tom. iii. pp. 23, 28, 30, &c.

of the happy event which was about to take place, and claimed his congratulations.

Charles, in reply, directed him to break off the affair. It was his strongest wish, he wrote, to obtain for his son the hand of an English princess, as a means of cementing a peace between the two kingdoms, and he had already entered into negotiations with this object in view. Normandy king-at-arms was also despatched with letters for the Duke of Savoy, expressing astonishment at the encouragement given to the dauphin's suit before the sentiments of his father had been ascertained. Louis had reached Chambéry, where the nuptials were to be solemnized, before the arrival of the messenger; and the latter had no sooner dismounted from his horse than he found himself surrounded by the dauphin's people, who welcomed him as a countryman, provided him with excellent lodgings, exhorted him to "make good cheer," and inquired the nature of his business. This he declined to communicate, his instructions being to deliver his despatches and message to the duke in person. It was wholly impossible, he was told, that he should be admitted to an audience with the duke; and a proposition was kindly made that he should go to Grenoble, and "spend four or five days in amusing himself," a promise being generously given to defray all his expenses. Finding he could do no better, he consented at length, after much wrangling, to present his letters to the chancellor of Savoy. The next morning he was taken to a church, and seated in a somewhat obscure corner, from which, however, he contrived to catch a glimpse of the bridal train, and of "my lord the dauphin, dressed in a long robe of crimson velvet trimmed with ermine." Two days later he was

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sent back to France, the bearer of a letter from the Duke of Savoy, who lamented that he had not received the royal missive until "after the espousals had been celebrated with all due solemnity and grandeur."[35]

The course pursued by Louis during the nine years of his government in Dauphiné excited not only the displeasure of the king, but the murmurs of the inhabitants. His activity, and the excellence of his intentions, were undeniable. He introduced many reforms in the administrative and judicial systems, but they were not received with the gratitude which he had a right to expect; and, when he proceeded to impose taxes without the previous consent of the estates, that body appealed to the king to protect them in the enjoyment of their rights. Charles perceived that his intervention ought no longer to be delayed. He summoned Louis to return to the court. The prince was most anxious to obey this command, but represented that he could not do so with safety; that he had reasons for believing that the royal ministers were inimical to him, and were plotting his destruction. Charles, on the other hand, thought he had a better right to complain that the dauphin was surrounded by persons who encouraged him in his disobedience. He dismissed the envoys of Louis with a curt response. He would not listen to empty assurances. It was time, he declared, that this state of things should end; it had lasted too long. "Let my son," he said, "return to his duty, and he shall be treated as a son. As to the fears which he professes to have, his security is my word, which my enemies have never refused to

[35] Procès-verbal de Normandie Roi d'armes du voyage par lui fait par commandement du Roi; Lettre du Duc de Savoye au Roy; Duclos, tom. iii. pp. 68-75.

accept."[36] Preceded by an army, the king approached the confines of Dauphiné.

Louis was indefatigable in his efforts to avert the impending blow. He despatched another embassy to Charles, to thank him for his most gracious answer, and to resume the negotiations which that answer had so abruptly closed. He invoked the mediation of the Pope, of the Duke of Burgundy, of the King of Castile. He invoked the interposition of Heaven by vows and offerings made in his name at the most celebrated shrines of Christendom.[37] Finally, he prepared to make an appeal to arms. He summoned the nobles of the province to his aid, and commanded the people to retire with their property into the fortified towns. If his summons were obeyed, "he would not," he remarked, "give his father the trouble of coming to seek him; he would meet him at Lyons." Meantime the Count of Dammartin received orders from the king to occupy Dauphiné with his troops, and to secure the person of the prince. He encountered no resistance as he advanced. The inhabitants everywhere manifested their loyalty to their sovereign, and their satisfaction with the course which he had taken. On his march he learned that Louis, whose passion for the chase was almost as ardent as his passion for intrigue, had appointed a day for a great hunt. Dammartin resolved that the hunter should be taken in his own toils. He laid his plans accordingly; but when he arrived at the spot he found that the game had escaped him.[38]

[36] See the instructions of the dauphin's envoy, Courcillon; the king's verbal reply (the matter sufficiently characteristic, but embellished, as usual, with the formal flourishes of the official *rédacteur*); and other documents, Duclos, tom. iii. pp. 81-97.

[37] Lenglet, tom. i. Préface, p. xxx.

[38] Duclercq, tom. ii. p. 234.—Letter of Dammartin, and other documents,

The Prince had mounted his horse at the hour assigned; but, as soon as the greater number of his suite had taken their way to the place of rendezvous, he himself, accompanied by six of his attendants, rode off in an opposite direction. He crossed the frontiers of Dauphiné, traversed part of Savoy, and scarcely halted until he arrived at Saint-Claude, a small town in Franche-Compté much frequented by devotees. Here he was received by the Prince of Orange and the Marshal of Burgundy. He immediately sent a message to Philip, informing him that he had come to Saint-Claude upon a pilgrimage. He then proceeded to write an equally veracious letter to the king, to acquaint him with his reasons for this sudden journey. He had heard that his uncle of Burgundy was preparing to set out upon a crusade against the Turks; and, as he was himself bound by the oath which he had taken as "standard-bearer of the Church" to aid in the defence of Christendom, and had in fact received an express summons to that effect from the Pope, he proposed to take part in the intended enterprise.[39] Having despatched this characteristic epistle, he resumed his journey, and, on the 10th of September, 1456, arrived at Brussels.

It was eight o'clock in the evening when he entered the outer court of the palace, to which the Duchess and the Countess of Charolais had descended with their suite to receive him. As soon as he appeared these great ladies snatched their trains from the hands of the gentlemen who bore them, and knelt to the ground. Hastening forward, the prince saluted all the fair faces present in due succession of rank. He then offered his

in Duclos, tom. iii. pp. 100-102, 185, et seq.

[39] Lettre du Dauphin au Roi, Duclos, tom. iii. p. 103.

left arm to Isabella to escort her into the palace. But, in so doing, he had assigned her the place of honour, which she, with her accustomed scrupulousness, declined to accept. "I fear you mean to mock me, monseigneur," she said, "in giving me a pre-eminence to which I am not entitled." "Alas, madam," replied the dauphin, "you see before you the poorest man in all the realm of France. It well becomes me to pay you honour, for I know not where to find a protector save in my fair uncle and yourself." This contest of modesty lasted for more than a quarter of an hour; but at length the lady, who stood upon the strong ground both of "rule and reason," carried her point.[40]

It was edifying to witness the humility of this heir to a kingdom, who had sought an asylum on the hearth-stone of the younger and alien branch of his family. When he was informed that the duke, who had hastened back from Holland to welcome him, was about to arrive, no persuasions could induce him to remain, as etiquette required, in his own apartment. He stood in the court-yard beside the duchess, and, as soon as her lord entered, would have rushed forward to embrace him, if she had not held him tightly by the arm while Philip made the "first two obeisances."[41]

[40] Honneurs de la Cour, Saint-Palaye, tom. iii. pp. 209, 210.

The sense of the passage is somewhat obscure. Louis seems at first to have insisted that the duchess should walk before him; while she contended that her place was behind. M. de Barante supposes the right to have been the place of honour, and that it was Isabella who yielded. Basin (tom. i. p. 228), by whom he was apparently misled, makes a similar error. But the person highest in station is often mentioned as being on the left, because he had on his right the person next in rank. Had Louis placed the duchess on his right hand, he would, of course, have been merely giving her the precedence to which she was entitled over the other persons present, not over himself. Her only concession was in taking his arm, and walking beside him.

[41] Idem, pp. 212, 213.

But, although the duke regarded it as a matter which concerned his own honour to yield due reverence[42] and to afford his powerful protection to "the eldest son of France," the representative of that royal and illustrious line from which he was himself descended, he was not to be entrapped into giving any encouragement to the dauphin's schemes. He listened with compassion to this "desolate prince," this "prince who appeared before him as one ruined, dejected, heart-broken," "who had come, so poorly attended, by dangerous routes, from a distant country, to wit, Dauphiné;" but when Louis closed his tale with a request that his fair uncle would assist him in raising an army for the purpose of compelling the king to dismiss his obnoxious ministers, Philip answered, "Monseigneur, I am ready to serve you with my possessions and with my body against all the world, your father alone excepted; but for him, I think him so sage and discreet a prince, that he knows well how to regulate his own household without counsel from any one."[43]

He determined on sending an embassy to the King of France, to justify his conduct and solicit a pardon for the fugitive. Louis, also, gave formal instructions to the envoys to treat on his behalf. "Although he

[42] "Car mondit Sieur est aîné fils de France, auquel mondit Sieur le Duc, à ce moyen, tant pour l'honneur du Roi que de sadite très-noble maison, dont il est issu, lui doit et est tenu lui faire révérence et honneur." Duclos, tom. iii. p. 121.

The punctilious respect paid to Louis at the Burgundian court is much commended by Basin and Aliénor de Poitiers. The duchess was never served with a cover, or had the dishes tasted before her, in his presence. Philip always uncovered and bent the knee when addressing him, and, when riding behind him, would not, on any account, have "suffered his horse's head to cross the tail of the dauphin's."

[43] Ce que les Ambassadeurs de Monsieur le Duc dirent au Roi, Duclos, tom. iii. p. 122.—De Coussy, tom. ii. p. 275.

had not done, but had received, wrong," yet, as "there was no possible thing which he was not willing to perform in order to obtain his father's grace," he consented to ask his forgiveness, provided the king would reinstate him in his government, grant him a pension, and be pleased to pledge his royal word that he would undertake nothing against him or any of his servants.[44] But, while he gave this remarkable proof of a contrite spirit, he did not omit to send forth an edict as dauphin, forbidding his subjects to render obedience to the person to whom, at his departure, he had committed the government, and who, as he heard, was exercising authority in "another name than his."[45]

The king returned the same answer as before to the demands which Louis clothed in the language of concession. He was ready to restore his son to favour whenever the prince should show by his acts that he desired to obtain it. But he soon ceased to indulge in the expectation that his offers would have any effect. "Louis," he remarked, "has a suspicious nature; it will be long before he returns to France. As for my cousin of Burgundy, he has given shelter to a fox that will one day devour his chickens."[46]

As Charles would neither restore him to his former post nor grant him a pension, the dauphin was fain to be beholden to his fair uncle not only for protection, but for the means of living. Philip assigned him as a residence the castle of Genappe, in the neighbourhood of Brussels, and allowed him three thousand francs a month for his support. He had been joined by the

[44] These propositions are entitled "Effet des choses de quoi Monseigneur *se contentera bit.*" Duclos, tom. iii. p. 129.

[45] Lettres de Louis Dauphin, Duclos, tom. iii. p. 132, et seq.

[46] De Coussy, tom. i. p. 28.—Petitot, Introduction to Commines.

dauphiness, as well as by many of his adherents, whom he had perhaps hoped to get rid of by his precipitate and secret flight, but whose regard for their own safety did not permit them to remain behind. It was no easy matter for him, out of Philip's bounty, to defray the expenses of such an establishment.[47] He was compelled to have recourse to the usual shifts of persons in reduced circumstances—to sell or pawn such articles of value as he had brought with him to the Netherlands. Yet he bore his misfortunes with a charming equanimity and even cheerfulness of spirit. His only disquietude arose from the reflection that he had incurred his father's displeasure, by which, in spite of his conscious innocence, he was, as Philip wrote to the king, "marvellously cast down." His affability and good-nature gained him a host of friends at the Burgundian court. He was on the best terms with every one—with the duke's favourites, as well as with their mortal enemy, the duke's son. The situation of Genappe, on the verge of an extensive forest, furnished ample facilities for his favourite recreation. He gathered around him a little society composed not merely of noblemen, but of men of learning and science,[48] and amused himself at table by calling upon each of his guests in turn to relate a merry tale. Many of these stories were, at a later period, collected and published under the title of "The Hundred New Tales," and are still occasionally reprinted. The feverish love of power that had so long possessed him seemed to have entirely subsided. To adorn a private station had evidently become the

[47] In addition, however, to the allowance to the dauphin mentioned in the text, the principal members of his household had pensions settled upon them by Philip. Gachard, note to Barante, tom. ii. p. 149.

[48] Naudé, Addition à l'Hist. de Louis XI., Lenglet, tom. iv. p. 276.

highest object of his ambition. His attention to the minor duties of society was exemplary and engaging. The Countess of Charolais having given birth to a daughter, Louis officiated as the godfather. He supported the child's head, and bestowed upon her the name of Mary, "from his love for his mother, the Queen of France," and with tender recollections, we may surmise, of his own happy and docile childhood.[49] How ridiculous to suppose that this amiable prince, this pattern of the domestic virtues, this frank and social companion, had a brain full of intrigues and conspiracies—that he was a "dangerous person," in conversing with whom it were well to be on one's guard, in feasting with whom it were best to be provided with a spoon of much more than the ordinary length!

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Above all, it was delightful to witness the effusions of his gratitude. Doubtless the connection was as flattering to Philip's pride as it was gratifying to his generosity.[50] Nor was he, perhaps, insensible to the advantages to be derived from it. As long as he had the heir to the crown in his keeping, he might expect that the king would be very cautious of affording him any pretext for complaint. He might look forward to a time when a new king, indebted for his crown and even for his life to the duke of Burgundy, would gratefully accept him as his counsellor and guide, and seize the opportunity of making a solid return for the favours which he had received. That he had good right to count upon such a return was evident from the warmth of the dauphin's protestations. Louis, so unfortunate

[49] Duclercq, tom. ii. p. 240.—Honneurs de la Cour.

[50] Reiffenberg makes some pertinent remarks on this point in his Mém. sur le séjour que Louis Dauphin fit aux Pays-bas.

in the closer ties of nature and of blood, had found in his protector a real parent, and was never so happy as when an occasion offered for displaying his more than filial reverence and affection. During his residence at Genappe the dauphiness presented him with a son. He notified this event to the king in a letter full of piety and gratitude, and to the Archbishop and municipal authorities of Paris by a circular in which he desired that it should be celebrated with the usual procession and *Te Deum*. Charles, in reply, expressed his satisfaction, though in terms somewhat scant for the occasion, and pointedly reminded Louis that he would best evince his thankfulness to his Creator by observing His commandments.[51] Very different was the manner in which Philip received the announcement. He presented the messenger with a thousand gold pieces. He ordered public rejoicings to be made in all the towns in his dominions. No circumstance of pomp was wanting at the baptism. The duke was himself one of the sponsors, and his customary munificence displayed itself in the most costly gifts to the infant prince as well as to the parents. When the ceremony was concluded, Louis, with head uncovered, expressed his thanks. "Dearest uncle," he said, "it is impossible I should ever be able to requite the honour you have done me except by dedicating to your service myself, my wife, and my child." Every one present was affected to tears by the warmth of emotion thus displayed.[52]

[51] "Nous semble bien que de tant que Dieu notre Créateur vous donne plus de graces, de tant plus le devez louer et mercier, et garder de le courroucer, et en toutes choses accomplir ses commandemens." Duclos, tom. iii. p. 152.

[52] Duclercq, tom. ii. pp. 354, 355. —The rejoicings were premature, as the child lived only a few months.

The Count of Charolais was not, perhaps, such a person as Louis would have selected for the companion of his leisure. It is probable, in fact, that the dauphin —himself so sociable and full of playful vivacity— looked with secret aversion at his stern cousin, who drank no wine, and had no jest, no piquant story, to contribute to the common stock.[53] Yet there are circumstances which might tempt us to believe that their intercourse was more frequent than would be inferred from the contrariety of their dispositions or the direct statements of the chroniclers. Opposed as were their characters in all other respects, there was one point of resemblance between them. Charles, like Louis, was impatient to handle the reins of government; he too, though with better reason, complained of the laxity of his father's administration; he too regarded his father's ministers as his natural enemies, and as obstacles in the way of his ambition.

Philip the Good possessed a will which no prudent person would have ventured openly to thwart. But he had not the self-relying resoluteness of his son. Fierce in his anger, and obstinate when opposed, he was yet open to the influence of those who understood his character, and who knew how to adapt themselves to his humour. Antony and John de Croy, members of a family which, three generations back, had occupied the position of wealthy and respectable burghers at Amiens, but which traced its descent, at least to its own satisfaction, from the royal house of Hungary, had risen to preeminence among the nobles of the Burgun-

[53] In the "Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles" the names of the narrators are given, including those of the dauphin, the duke, and many of the courtiers. None of the stories are attributed to the Count of Charolais, though he is mentioned as an auditor.

dian states and in the counsels of the sovereign. Their grandfather had owed his patent of nobility to the purchase of an estate. Their father had been concerned in the assassination of the Duke of Orleans; their sister had been the mistress of John the Fearless.[54] The elder brother, though considerably older than Philip, had been the companion and confidant of his boyhood. He now held the post of first chamberlain, the highest in the ducal household. He was governor of Namur, of Luxembourg, and of Limbourg. He held, besides, many other lucrative but less important offices; and pensions and estates had been bestowed upon him without stint. John de Croy Count of Chimay, was captain-general and grand bailiff of Hainault.[55] Thus the two brothers exercised direct authority over all the southern Netherlands; the avenues to promotion were blocked up by their relatives and dependents; while such was the ascendancy which they had gradually obtained over Philip's

[54] Modern Belgian historians seldom intimate an opinion relative to the claims of this family to royal descent, which, however, have formed a subject of public controversy, and even of judicial investigation, in the present century—the right of its existing representatives to quarter the arms of Hungary having been contested by M. de Crouy-Chanel, whose own pretensions to this honour are possibly less questionable. This gentleman, in an erudite but somewhat passionate article, published in 1835 in the "Drapeaublanc," recites the facts noticed in the text, and adds, with sufficient emphasis, "Such is the origin of the *noble* family of the Croys of Amiens. . . . This is the *first* mention of their names to be found in history. . . . Here is the source of the earliest *honours* bestowed upon them." He derives their attempt to confound their ancestry with that of the veritable Hungarian Croys from their having obtained the grant of an estate belonging to the latter family; which, he remarks, is much the same as if a member of the *bande noire*, after getting possession of a castle of the Montmorencies, should assume the arms of that illustrious house.

[55] The grants and offices held by the different members of the family are enumerated by Gachard in his Notice des Archives de M. le Duc de Caraman.

mind, that while he still imagined himself the most powerful of princes, the government had been virtually surrendered into their hands.

They had not, however, escaped the usual responsibilities and penalties of power thus obtained. All the disorders of the political system, whether local or general,—the prevalence of crime, the inefficiency of the laws, the negligence and corruption which during the latter years of Philip's reign had crept into every branch of the administration,[56]—were popularly charged upon the Croys. If any one breathed a murmur against the good duke, "Lay not the blame," it was answered, "on that noble old man, but on those who have abused his confidence, and have basely taken advantage of the openness and generosity of his nature."[57] By the great body of the nobility the Croys were regarded as upstarts, indebted for their elevation to arts which high-born men disdained to practise. Foremost among the malcontents was the Count of Saint-Pol, "the wealthiest count in France," who was allied by blood or marriage with most of the reigning families of Christendom, whose vast possessions gave him an almost unlimited sway in a region where the family of Croy had followed the ignoble

[56] "Ce qui tournoit à grand playe à ses pays et subjects, en faict de justice, en faict de finances, en faict de marchandises, et en faict de diverses iniquités." Chastellain, p. 506.—The pages of Duclercq, whose notices of the remarkable occurrences of his time are not confined to camps and courts, furnish ample confirmation of this statement.

[57] Chastellain considers this point with an impartiality the more laudable that his own veneration for his master falls little short of idolatry. He states the facts, offers the excuse, admits its insufficiency,—"since it behoves a prince to have personal knowledge of all his affairs,"—but, on the further plea of Philip's failing years, concludes by leaving the reproach upon his advisers. "*Ergo*, la malice est devers eux; et l'excuse devers le noble viellart." Œuvres, loc. cit.

pursuits of industry or filled the petty offices of a municipal magistracy, and whose haughty spirit not only rejected with disdain the advances made to him by men so inferior in origin, but was secretly chafed by his dependence as a vassal on the protection of the Burgundian sovereign.

But the brothers were now to encounter a still more formidable rivalry than that of Saint-Pol. Others might envy their sudden rise, the honours and wealth they had accumulated, their monopoly of favours which might properly have been distributed among many claimants. But it was not for such things as these that they were envied by their master's son. These he did not want; to these he had no claim. His rivalry extended to that influence of which these were merely the external indications. He detested the Croys for their usurpation of a power to which, if it were to be delegated at all, he himself, and he alone, could rightfully aspire.

The first intimation of this feeling, the intensity of which was as yet little suspected by the objects of it, is of a somewhat doubtful date, but belongs to the period of the dauphin's residence in the Netherlands, probably to the winter following his arrival. Saint-Pol made his appearance at the French court in the character, according to his own account,—for he bore no credentials,—of an authorized agent of the Burgundian heir. He disclosed a project formed by the latter for forcibly dispossessing the Croys of their authority, and driving them from the court. No further restraint was to be imposed upon Philip than what must be implied in the expulsion of the favourites. His resentment, however, might be expected to be

violent, whatever were the result of the attempt; and Saint-Pol was instructed to inquire whether the Count of Charolais, if compelled to abandon his father's dominions, might look for protection in France, and for military employment and command.[58] The king gave a civil but evasive reply. Besides his aversion to violence, which he intimated in his answer, he was not without suspicions as to the sincerity of the proposal. He fancied, perhaps, that it bore the marks of a familiar hand. The project was dropped. Had it been carried out, the curious spectacle would have been presented of the heirs of two great sovereignties living as exiles, each in the dominions to be one day inherited by the other. In this case, Charles the Seventh, if he had deemed it consonant with his honour, might have proposed an exchange. But the coincidence would have been less surprising in reality than in appearance. For the details of his scheme the count was obviously indebted, if not to the private suggestions, at least to the open example, of the dauphin.

But, while there was a strong similarity in the situations and conduct of these two princes, whose fortunes were henceforth to be mutually involved, the contrast of character was not the less apparent. In one it was the absence of feeling, in the other its violent extremes, that formed the distinguishing trait. Louis had pursued the career of rebellion, if not with success, at least with a matchless facility, because he had none but external obstacles to contend with. Charles had to struggle against the common prejudices of nature — against weak-

[58] The only account of this affair is given in a letter, without date, signature, or address, but written evidently by a member of the royal council for the information of a party interested, probably the Sire de Croy.

nesses from which Louis was altogether exempt. After one of those stormy conflicts which had now become of frequent occurrence between the father and son, Charles was subject to fits of compunction; and he, who so seldom yielded to the wishes or entreaties of others, submitted without further demur to the commands of Philip.

A scene of this kind will illustrate the characters of all the parties concerned. The Count of Charolais had been ordered to confer a vacant post in his household on a son of John de Croy. Instead of complying, he issued an "ordinance" appointing another person. Philip sent for him into his oratory, directing that he should bring with him this paper, which, as soon as he had entered, his father took from his hand and threw into the fire, bidding him draw up another, of a different tenor.[59] The count answered with a direct refusal. "You may, if you please," he exclaimed, "make these Croys your masters; but they shall never be mine." A lighter provocation would have sufficed to throw Philip into an ecstacy of rage. He commanded Charles to depart from his dominions, and, drawing his dagger, rushed towards him with menacing gestures.[60] The duchess — who, anticipating an outburst which she hoped to allay, was present at the meeting — interposed to protect her son, and followed him from the apartment. This very natural proceeding was regarded by her husband as an inexpiable offence. Beside himself with passion, he hastily descended the stairs, and, calling for his horse, rode unattended through the park into the adjoining Forest of Soignies.

It was the month of January. A violent hail-storm

[59] "Dit à son fils, 'Or allez querre vos ordonnances: car il vous en faut de nouvelles.'" Lamarche, tom. ii. p. 224.

[60] Duclercq, tom. iii. p. 238.

had been succeeded by a not less violent rain. But, heedless of the tempest, of the approaching night, and of the direction in which he went, the duke galloped furiously along, until his progress was impeded by the thickness of the woods. His mind was haunted with gloomy but vague reflections, and with projects worthy of a truant school-boy. He would abdicate his power, withdraw from the Netherlands, and spend the remainder of his days in some wild and secluded part of Burgundy. Meanwhile his present situation had become a perilous one. He was compelled to dismount, and force his way on foot through brambles and underbrush. His face and hands were covered with blood. It was long after midnight when he discovered the fire of a charcoal-burner, by whom he was guided to the lonely hut of a huntsman or forester. Here he found shelter and warmth, and was made welcome to such refreshment as his host was able to provide. While eating his meagre supper the unknown guest was edified by a description of his companion's pursuits, and by his philosophical and pertinent assurances of the happiness attendant on a life of solitude and poverty. In the morning the duke was conducted to Genappe, whence tidings of his safety were speedily transmitted to Brussels.[61]

At the palace the night had, of course, been passed in the greatest disorder and anxiety. From hour to hour fresh messengers had been sent out; but such information as they brought back served only to increase the alarm. The dauphin arrived, to console with the afflicted household. But his sympathies were so acute, that, far from being competent to the task, he was under the

[61] Lamarche. — Duclercq. — Châtellain, unpublished fragment, cited by Kervyn de Letterhove, Hist. de Flandre.

necessity of accepting comfort from those who had a still nearer cause for grief. He took the whole blame of the affair upon himself. It was his unhappy fate, he explained, that wherever he went his presence was sure to bring misfortune—even among those whom he most loved. At length the announcement came that the duke was on his way home. After the first moments of relief and satisfaction, the duchess and Charles found a new source of embarrassment in determining the line of conduct which they ought to adopt. It was known that Philip's mind was still highly inflamed, and that his resentment was especially directed against his wife. "Alas!" said the poor lady, "what could I do? I knew that my husband was a prince of a high courage, and dreadful in his wrath. I beseech him to pardon me. I am a stranger in this land, and have no one but my son to comfort and protect me."[62] She resolved, finally, to withdraw from the court—a resolution which was doubtless the result of a long endurance of domestic troubles brought suddenly to a climax. Although she had lived for so many years in the Netherlands, she was still, as she herself expressed it, "a stranger." She had no taste for the splendours or the festivities of the Burgundian court, nor does she seem to have possessed that easiness of disposition which was commended by foreigners as enabling the Flemish dames to bear without repining the neglect and infidelity of their lords. Like so many of her line, she had a natural inclination to a religious life, and, having founded a convent of "Grey Sisters," she took up her residence among them, and, except for a brief interval, never again made her appearance in the world.

[62] Lamarche, tom. ii. p. 225.

In the deliberations which preceded the duke's return to Brussels, it was deemed the most prudent course for the Count of Charolais to retire to Dendermonde, and await a communication from his father. The dauphin undertook the office, for which he was eminently suited, of assuaging Philip's anger. At first, indeed, the proud and fiery prince rejected his interference, intimating in emphatic terms that he needed no man's counsel in the management of his private affairs. But how was it possible to resist the entreaties of one who, in his humility and tenderness of heart, threw himself at the duke's feet, and, with the tears streaming from his eyes, addressed him as "his benefactor and his father."[63] Charles, as usual under the influence of remorse—a sentiment which he seems to have experienced acutely on such occasions, but not at all on others—was ready to accept whatever conditions Philip might annex to his forgiveness. Two of the principal members of his household, suspected by his father of intermeddling in these matters, were dismissed from his service, and banished from the Burgundian states. One of them, Guillaume Bîche—originally "a poor *valeton* from Champagne," but a person of remarkable talents and address—found employment at the French court, and secretly transmitted to his former master, for the benefit of the dauphin, such items of intelligence as he was able to collect respecting a scene in which Louis, long as he had been absent from it, still continued to take the liveliest interest.

For this prince, in his active and ardent sympathy in the domestic concerns of others, had not ceased to remember his own. He took care, also, that the king

[63] Chastellain, ap. Kervyn, Hist. de Flandre.

should not forget them. Embassies and messengers were constantly passing to and fro, bearing the supplications and remonstrances of Louis, and the briefer but more pointed admonitions of Charles. The Bishop of Arras, employed as the advocate of the dauphin, painted the distresses, the anxiety, and the virtues of his client in a pathetic and interminable harangue, stuffed with citations from Scripture and from the philosophers and poets of antiquity. "Alas! what shall I say? how shall I speak? The dews of heaven are not more grateful to the thirsty soil than is the thought of paternal love to my lord the prince. Tears and lamentations cannot express his anguish. What heart is there so hard as not to feel compassion for one born to a state of grandeur to which no other in the world can be compared, yet plunged by adverse fortune and the malice of his enemies into want and tribulation? But, in the midst of these calamities, behold his patience! As Job, when deprived of wealth, when overwhelmed by tempest upon tempest, uttered no blasphemy against his Maker, so a thousand afflictions have not been able to extinguish that love and reverence for the king his father which Monseigneur has in so many instances displayed."[64]

As all this touching eloquence proved of no avail, the patient Louis endeavoured to find consolation in the study of astrology, and consulted the stars respecting the duration of his father's life.[65] Charles did his son the injustice of suspecting that he had taken counsel on the same subject with terrestrial agents. Letters, written with the design that they should fall into the

[64] Réponse de Monseigneur le Dauphin aux Ambassadeurs du Roi, parlée et faite par l'Évêque d'Arras, Duclos, tom. iii. pp. 157-178.

[65] Seyssel, Hist. de Louys XII. (Paris, 1615), p. 80.

king's hands, affected to speak of a good understanding between the dauphin and the persons whom he publicly professed to consider as his bitterest enemies. A terrible chimera took possession of the royal bosom. The monarch who in early life had encountered real dangers and misfortunes with so much courage and equanimity, was now to fall a victim to the phantoms of his own brain. He seemed to be surrounded by an invisible web, from which there was no possibility of escape. That universal dread of poison which had embalmed itself in one of the commonest ceremonies of the feudal household—no prince or noble eating of any dish that had not been previously tasted in his presence—assumed in Charles's mind the character of monomania. He lost all confidence in the persons whom he had most trusted. He imprisoned his physicians. At last he refused to eat, and passed several successive days without taking any food. After long deliberation, it was resolved by his council that force should be employed to save him from the horrible death to which he was driven by the fear of death. Nutriment in the form of jellies was accordingly administered. But it was too late. Nature, thus cruelly outraged, refused to rally. Charles the Victorious expired of starvation, in the fifty-eighth year of his age, and the thirty-ninth of his reign.[66] July 22, 1461.

[66] This account of Charles's death is rejected by Sismondi and by M. Kervyn de Letterhove as resting on no better foundation than popular rumour, and as contradicted by the tenor of a letter signed by all the members of the royal council, and bearing the date of July 17, in which the king's illness is stated to be the effect of an ulcerated tooth, and no mention is made of his voluntary abstinence from food. (Duclos, tom. iii. p. 196.) But this letter was addressed to the dauphin; it was written for the evident purpose of conciliating his favour, at a crisis felt by the writers to be a momentous one for them; and therefore the evidence, chiefly negative, which has been de-

It has been remarked of this sovereign, whose career had been so remarkable, and on the whole so prosperous —whose natural abilities were so excellent, and whose temperament was so equable—that he might have been accounted happy if he had had a different father, a different mother, and a different son. The imbecility of one parent, and the crimes of the other, were among the causes which had rendered the outset of his life a period of strange confusion and calamity; his existence had been shortened, and its close embittered, by the conduct of his eldest born, who was to reap the advantages of his struggles and his triumphs. But, if no one had suffered more by the weakness and wickedness of human nature, none had profited more by its nobleness and heroism. For him the inspired peasant girl of Lorraine had passed through the din of battle and the fires of martyrdom; to him the fair Agnes Sorel had given the devotion of a too tender but all-sacrificing heart. Brave knights like Dunois, wise and honest statesmen like Brezé, skilful and enlightened financiers like Jean Bureau and Jacques Cœur, had served him with fidelity and been poorly rewarded. A nation had rallied round him in his need, and now bewailed his death with no affected sorrow.[67]

There was one person, however, whose habitual cheer-

duced from it, cannot with much plausibility be opposed to the testimony of Commines, who had not, indeed, any personal knowledge of the matter, but who had every opportunity of obtaining his information from the best sources, and who speaks of the facts stated in the text as being well known to Louis and recalled by him when his own end was approaching—a point on which the authority is beyond question or cavil. (Mémoires, tom. ii. pp. 215, 542.)

[67] "On pria moult par tout le royaume pour ledit roy Charles, et fust moult plouré et plaint, car il estoit aimé par tout sondit royaume." Duclercq, tom. iii. p. 148.—And see De Troyes, Chroniques de Louis XI., (ed. Lenglet,) p. 8.

fulness was in no degree disturbed by this event. Louis, notwithstanding his straitened circumstances, bestowed a liberal guerdon on the bearer of the welcome news. His elation was, in fact, too strong for concealment or control.[68] After hearing a few masses somewhat hastily and informally celebrated for the soul of his deceased father, he donned his gayest suit of white and red, and, attended by a numerous company all attired in the same bright colours, spent the afternoon as usual in hunting.[69] He refused at first to see any one who had put on mourning for the late king. After a while his exuberant rejoicings subsided into tranquil gratitude. He was filled with devout amazement when he reflected on the Providence that had safely led him through so many dangers and difficulties to the fair inheritance of which, as he was firmly convinced, it had been intended to despoil him. He who but yesterday esteemed himself the poorest and most unfortunate of princes—who had

[68] "Ne fut oncques si joyeulx que de la mort. . . . Car il avoit ce que tout son vivant avoit convoité, et pour quoy il avoit prié Dieu par intercessions et *manières estranges*." Chastellain, p. 133. An evident intimation, from a source not to be lightly discredited, that Louis had tampered with the mysteries of the black art in the hope of abridging his father's life. This was an accusation of too horrible a nature, in the estimation of that age, to be openly made against the king of France by a person in Chastellain's position, even though an enemy.

[69] Basin, tom. i. p. 311.—Duclercq, while he states the same facts, puts on one of them at least a different construction. "Prestement la messe du serviche dite et le disner fait, ledit roy Loys se vestit de pourpre et s'en alla a la chasse, et est la maniere que sitost qu'ung roy de Franche est mort, son fils aisné, ou son plus prochain, est roy, et n'est point le royaume sans roy; [Le roi est mort, vive le roi!] et pour ceste cause le nouvel roy ne porte de deuil, ains se veste de pourpre ou de rouge, en signifiant qu'il y a roy en Franche." (Mémoires, tom. iii. p. 146.) Aliénor de Poitiers, an unquestionable authority, also informs us that a king of France wore no mourning except red. But we are not informed that this custom extended to the household; nor can we suppose that hunting was part of the obsequies of a deceased king, or a mode of proclaiming the advent of a new one.

been deprived of his father's love and expelled from his kingdom—who had passed so many years in exile, living upon alms, sitting like an uninvited guest or poor relation at the table of the Duke of Burgundy, where he was forced to exert all his powers of entertainment lest his host should weary of his company[70]—had suddenly, and "as if by the flitting of a dream," become the first among kings, a monarch whose breath was power, whose word was life.[71]

In his eagerness to grasp the sceptre which was waiting for him, he omitted, before his departure from the Netherlands, to take leave of the Countess of Charolais, who, since the retirement of her mother-in-law, might be considered as his hostess. He left directions, however, with his queen, who was to follow more leisurely, to borrow the countess's chariot and hackneys, in order that her journey into France might be made with becoming state.[72] For himself, he would doubtless have preferred to enter his kingdom, as he was afterwards wont to visit "the good towns," in the quietest and most un-

[70] "Luy falloit entretenir le prince et ses principaulx gouverneurs, de paour que on ne se ennuyast de luy à y estre tant." Commines, tom. ii. p. 266.

[71] "Hier encore me tenoys pour le plus povre fils de roy qui oncques fust, et qui depuis l'éage de mon enfance jusque ad ce jour présent n'ay eu que souffrance et tribulacion, povreté et angoisse en disette, et qui plus est expulsion d'hiretaige et d'amour de père, jusques à estre constrainct de vivre en emprunt et en mendicité, ma femme et moy sans pieds de terre, sans maison pour nous respondre, ne pour ung denier vaillant, s'il ne venoit de grâce et de charité de beaulx oncle, qui m'a entretenu ainsi par l'espasse de cinq ans; et maintenant, tout souldainement, comme se je partoye d'ung songe, Dieu m'a envoyé nouvel eur; et en lieu de ma povreté passé, m'a faict le plus riche et plus puissant roy des chrestiens." Chastellain, p. 129.

[72] Idem, p. 135.—He adds, "Si le fist de grand cuer ladicte comtesse, nonobstant que la chose lui sembloit assez estrange, que ung tel noble roy et qui tant avoit rechupt d'honneur et de service en la maison et tant promis le recongnoistre quand l'heure viendroit, se partit sans dire oncques mot."

ostentatious manner, observing all things without himself attracting observation. But he was still dubious in regard to his reception—possessed with the idea that plots had been formed against him, in his father's lifetime, with the design of setting him aside and placing his younger brother on the throne.[73] He waited, therefore, on the borders, till Philip should join him with a body of troops, to escort him to Rheims, where, in accordance with ancient usage, the ceremony of his coronation was to be performed.

"The good duke," says a Burgundian chronicler, "was very willing to accompany him; for, having nourished him five years in his own house and at his own expense, he desired to show that he had no thought of deserting him in his necessity."[74] Apart from this consideration, Philip was not the man to miss such an opportunity for making a demonstration of his magnificence and of his intimate relations with their new sovereign before the eyes of the French people. He sent forth a summons to *all* his vassals to assemble with their retainers at Avesnes; and the summons was obeyed with alacrity, for there was not a petty seigneur in Burgundy or the Netherlands who did not regard himself as having been in a certain sense the dauphin's protector—as having given him food and

[73] There is not a particle of proof that Louis had any real ground for his suspicions. In a letter addressed to him, a few weeks after his accession, the Count of Foix, one of the council, answering certain queries propounded by the king in regard to the intrigues of the court, asseverates that he had never heard the slightest intimation of any scheme for altering the succession. "The late monarch, he says, had even declined to invest his second son with the duchy of Guienne, on the ground that the alienation of a great fief ought not to be made in the absence, and without the consent, of the heir-apparent. Duclos, tom. iii. p. 206.

[74] Lamarche, tom. ii. p. 228.

shelter, and laid him under heavy obligations. Many of the nobles had still stronger reasons for expecting favours or rewards. They had conversed with him; they had hawked or hunted with him; they had dined at his table, and been treated by him with the most condescending familiarity.[75] One remembered to have been smilingly saluted as "his constable."[76] Another had lent him thirty crowns, and had his bond for the money,[77] which would doubtless be repaid with right royal interest. Louis beheld with amazement the numbers, from every quarter of the duke's dominions, that came flocking to the place of rendezvous. "Is my uncle," he inquired, "afraid to trust himself with me in France?" His apprehensions took a new turn. He prevailed on Philip to content himself with an escort of three or four thousand men. If the first orders had not been countermanded, with the effect of provoking general disappointment and disgust, the number, we are told, would have amounted to a hundred thousand.[78]

As it was, their journey resembled a triumphal procession, in which the Duke of Burgundy played the part of the conqueror, Louis that of the illustrious captive. The horses' trappings, which descended to the ground, were of velvet and silk, covered with precious stones and ornaments of gold, embroidered with the Burgundian arms, and fringed with silver bells, the constant jingling of which was very agreeable and "solacing."

[75] Chastellain confesses that, on such pretexts as these, the Burgundians looked forward to filling all the offices in the kingdom. Œuvres, p. 156.

[76] Idem, p. 132.

[77] Lenglet prints a bond given by Louis, for this sum, to the Sire de Sassenage, in 1558. Commines (ed. Lenglet), tom. i. p. 410, note.

[78] Basin, tom. ii. p. 3.—Duclercq, tom. iii. p. 144.—Chastellain, p. 128.

A multitude of wagons, overhung with cloth of gold and surmounted by banners, carried the duke's furniture, his tapestries, his table equipage, and the utensils of his kitchen. These were followed by herds of fat oxen and flocks of sheep, intended for the princes' consumption during their progress. Philip and his son, with the principal nobles, appeared in their highest splendour, preceded and followed by pages, archers, and men-at-arms, all in gorgeous costumes, and blazing with jewelry.[79]

In this state they made their entrance into Rheims; and the spectacle was pronounced the most magnificent that had ever been witnessed in France. Every object that met the eye proclaimed the wealth and power of "the great duke." The king, though attired in crimson satin, would have been one of the least conspicuous persons in the ovation, if the magistrates had not come out to welcome and salute him. He listened to the long orations and addresses made to him here and elsewhere on his journey with some degree of impatience, and in general uttered his thanks in the fewest possible words.[80] He exhibited, on the other hand, no

[79] Description de l'entrée de Philippe-le-Bon et Louis XI. à Reims, Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. p. 162, et seq.—Chastellain, p. 136.

[80] In what degree his impatience was excusable may be judged from the harangue delivered before him by the Chancellor of France, Juvenal des Ursins. In addition to the usual classical and Scriptural quotations, an allegory is presented, which, the orator remarked, he had already, introduced into his history. Wisdom Prudence, Power, and Patience figure as "four ladies," who have each a son, named respectively *Dico*, *Duco*, *Facio*, and *Fero*. In order that none of these young persons might aspire to rule alone, "the imperative of each had its tail docked off"—"C'est à sçavoir à *dico*, où en l'impératif dût avoir *dice*, il n'y avoit que *dic*," &c. (Duclos, tom. iii. pp. 208-214.) Louis is said to have exemplified his possession of these symbolical attributes of sovereignty by interrupting the orator with the stern command, "Be brief!" What is more certain is, that one of his first acts was to dispossess the excellent Juvenal of his office—a still more striking comment on his "*duco, duc*," but one, it must be added,

dissatisfaction at being eclipsed by the splendour of his vassal. He spent the night after his arrival at Rheims — while the princes and nobles were feasting and dancing—in privacy and devotion, making his confession, or, in the language of the time, "disposing of his conscience."[81] This was preparatory to his coronation, which was to take place on the following day.

In the morning he was conducted to the cathedral, where the ceremony was performed in the presence of a vast concourse. First Louis, "with bare head, his palms joined, and humbly on his two knees," adored the "*sainte ampoule*" of miraculous oil, which had been brought with great solemnity, and beneath a canopy, to the portal of the church. He was then placed between curtains, where the Duke of Burgundy and the other princes divested him of his clothes, stripping him completely naked "down to the navel." In this state he was escorted to the high altar, where he again knelt, while the archbishop anointed him from the *sainte ampoule* on the forehead, the eyes, the mouth, the breast, the arms, and the loins. He was then arrayed in royal robes of purple velvet embroidered with the *fleur-de-lys*, and conducted to a lofty staging at the further extremity of the church. The princes, prelates, and nobles, who had assisted in the ceremonies, now fell back, with the exception of the Duke of Burgundy, "the dean of the peers of France." Taking the crown in both his hands, Philip ascended the steps of the scaffold, twenty-eight in number, took his station behind the king, raised the crown aloft, and held it for several

which the king found reason afterwards to repent of.

[81] Comment, après l'entrée du roy, ledict seigneur se disposa de sa conscience," is the title of Chastellain's eighth chapter.

moments suspended above the royal head; then slowly and gently brought it to its resting-place, while his full, sonorous voice gave forth the battle-cry of France, "*Vive le Roy, Montjoye Saint-Denis!*" The multitude of spectators raised a responsive shout, and a loud peal of clarions and trumpets shook swarms of echoes from the groined roof.[82]

At the banquet which followed it was still the Duke of Burgundy who appeared as the principal figure. Though the king sat at the head of the table, arrayed in his regal attire, with the crown upon his head, he was still the guest of his fair uncle, whose cooks had provided the dinner, whose plate was displayed upon the sideboards, and whose servants waited on the company. In the midst of the repast the doors were thrown open, and porters entered bearing a costly present for the new sovereign. The good duke, overjoyed at witnessing a new reign inaugurated in a time of profound peace and with becoming splendour, considered that there could be no fitter occasion for exhibiting the extent of his riches and the liberality of his soul.[83] Such of the guests as were strangers, except from hearsay, to the splendours of the Burgundian court, gazed in astonishment at the images, goblets, miniature ships, and other articles, of the finest gold and rarest work-

[82] Chastellain, p. 141. — Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. p. 168, et seq.

[83] "Le bon duc qui véoit le jour de la gloire et de la joye que plus on avoit desiré au monde, comme de soy trouver paisiblement à la coronation d'ung roy de France, se délita en lui ouvrir le trésor de l'amour de son cueur et en lui monstrer honneur et libéralité profonde de tout ce que Dieu lui avoit envoyé et presté, pensant jamais le povoir mieulx employer, ne jamais soy trouver en lieu où le mieulx le peust faire." Chastellain, p. 142.—A covert allusion is here made to the coronation of the last king, under the auspices of Joan of Arc, when the Duke of Burgundy, instead of giving to the ceremony the sanction of his presence and co-operation, had been at open war with Charles and the champion of a rival claimant.

manship,—amounting in value to more than two hundred thousand crowns,—which Philip presented to the king as an emphatic token of his loyalty and good-will. Louis, being more accustomed to these displays and better acquainted with the duke's munificence, sat quiet and demure, paying little attention to the bustle and the buzzing which circulated through the hall. Finding the crown too large and heavy to be worn with comfort, he had it removed and placed beside him on the table. All the time of dinner he conversed in low and confidential tones with the gentleman who stood behind his chair—Philippe Pot, Seigneur de la Roche, a nobleman of Burgundy, distinguished at a later period, and in the councils of France, by his bold advocacy of popular rights.[84]

Far from meeting with any resistance in his assumption of the title which had rightfully devolved upon him, Louis found a source of embarrassment in the eagerness of his vassals to invest him with the prerogatives of sovereignty, and the pressing demands which called for his immediate exercise of them. The tidings of Charles's death had produced an excitement throughout the kingdom among a certain class of the population. Those who held offices in the gift of the crown, and the infinitely larger number that coveted these distinctions, were alike impatient to offer their services to his successor, whose absence at such a moment was universally deplored. Even before his departure from the Netherlands, many, whose fortunate proximity or greater alertness enabled them to outstrip their competitors, had hastened to greet him and join his train, which all along the route was swollen by fresh acces-

[84] Chastellain, loc. cit.

sions. At Rheims he found himself surrounded by a faithful and devoted army of placemen and place-hunters,[85] all ranging themselves around him as closely as possible, watching for the indications of his sovereign pleasure, and ready to execute his behests. There were, indeed, some few exceptions to these general manifestations of loyalty and zeal. Several of the late king's ministers, instead of taking a prominent part, as the duties of their station required, in the reception of the new monarch, chose to absent themselves entirely, and even selected this occasion, when all the world had come forth to bask in the glory of the rising sun, for retiring into the shadows of seclusion and obscurity. The sire de Brezé, seneschal of Normandy, having found a secure retreat, waited for an intimation from his friends, among whom he was fortunate enough to count the all-powerful Philip, as to the time when he might most appropriately present himself at the court. The Count of Dammartin, with still greater diffidence, made his preparations for going abroad.[86] On the other hand, the Burgundian nobles, being well assured that the grateful Louis was reserving "all the offices in the kingdom" for them, regarded with smiling pity the hopes and anxieties of the crowd.

Escorted by nearly all the great feudatories and nobles of the realm, the king made his entrance into the capital of his dominions on Monday the 31st of August, 1461. On this occasion he wore a purpoint of crimson satin covered by a long robe of white damask.

[85] Basin, tom. ii. p. 7.

[86] Extrait d'un Chronique sur le Comte de Dammartin, Lenglet, tom. ii. p. 322, et seq. The panic among those who were in any way connected with Dammartin is strongly painted. His servants deserted him; his friends refused to answer or even to receive his letters.

Mounted on a snow-white palfrey, he rode beneath a canopy of cloth of gold, upheld on the points of their lances, by four of the principal magistrates. The procession comprised more than fifty thousand persons, and the number of the spectators was estimated at half a million. Among the shows exhibited at different points along the route were angels who descended through the air by means of machinery and placed crowns and wreaths upon the king's head, and a group of beautiful girls, entirely naked, sporting in the waters of a fountain and singing blandishing songs in imitation of Sirens. After performing his devotions at Notre Dame, Louis proceeded to the royal palace, from which, on the following day, he removed to a mansion adjoining the fortress of the Bastille.[87]

The Duke of Burgundy took up his residence at his own house, the Hôtel d'Artois. Twenty-six years had elapsed since his last visit to Paris, then in the hands of the English. He was greeted with enthusiastic demonstrations by the inhabitants, who still retained their hereditary attachment to his person and family. "Welcome, noble duke!" they shouted; "welcome to your good city of Paris! Thanks for the care which you have taken of our king!" His presence threw an air of gaiety over the capital such as it had not worn for many a year, such as it was not soon to wear again. Tournaments and other brilliant spectacles furnished daily entertainment to the populace as well as to the higher ranks; while, at the Hôtel d'Artois, which had been sumptuously fitted up, there was a constant succession of banquets and balls on a scale of magnificence to which the French court had been little accustomed,

[87] De Troyes, p. 9.—Chastellain, p. 150.—Duclercq, tom. iii. p. 158, et seq.

A prince so splendid in his tastes could not fail to be popular with all classes. If all were not equally benefited by his profusion, none could murmur that it was indulged at their expense. By the ladies, among whom he distributed jewels and other valuable presents, his generosity was especially applauded. But what pleased them still more was his gallantry, the amiable and joyous manner in which he displayed his devotion to the sex. On one occasion he was seen riding through the streets on a palfrey, his niece, the Duchess of Orleans, being seated behind him, and one of her maidens, the most beautiful damsel in all Paris, mounted on the saddle-bow.[88]

The king meanwhile employed himself in a different manner. Notwithstanding his long residence in the Netherlands, he seemed to have little liking for shows or festivities. Much to the discontent of his subjects, he was seldom seen in public; but those who had business to transact with him made no complaint of his want of affability. He was, in fact, too much occupied with affairs of state to have time for anything else except his religious duties, his attention to which was wonderfully scrupulous. The same activity which had characterized his government in Dauphiné was already conspicuous in his present and far larger field of labour. He had dismissed not only the ministers of the late king, but an immense number of functionaries in every department and of every grade. This was no more than what had been expected by most, and desired by

[88] Duclercq, tom. iii. p. 174.—"Commenchèrent à trotter parmy les rues, en grand joye de tous les voyans; qui alloient disant: 'Et velà ung humain prinche! velà ung seigneur dont ung monde seroit estoré de l'avoir tel!'" Chastellain, p. 170.

many. But his appointments, in which he seemed to be governed by a spirit of caprice rather than any settled principle, occasioned no little surprise. Those who had the best reasons for anticipating promotion and rewards found themselves unaccountably forgotten. To one who urged, in a somewhat vehement tone, the promises made to him in former years, Louis smilingly remarked, "That, good friend, was while I was dauphin; but now I am king." On the other hand, a monk of Cluny, by name Pierre de Morvilliers, against whom a charge had been preferred by the Parliament, and who, in the royal presence, boldly demanded justice, refusing in lieu thereof to accept a pardon, was told in reply that the king had made him Chancellor of France.[89] Such a method of procedure might well be considered strange.

Above all, the Burgundian nobles were astonished and disgusted at the turn which affairs were taking. Since their arrival at Paris, they were no longer on terms of daily and familiar intercourse with the prince whom they had shielded in his adversity, and who had been so lavish in his acknowledgments. "Then he was dauphin; but now he was king!"—an immense distance, it would seem, separated these two positions, although a moment had been sufficient for crossing it. Of all that glittering and expectant throng not one, except the sire de Croy, could obtain either pension or place. The duke was besieged by the clamorous

[89] "'Sire,' dict l'autre, 'je désire bien estre en vostre grâce sans laquelle je ne puis vivre. Mais au regard du prochèe de quoy me parlez, si ne demande grâce nulle, fors que justice.' . . . Et le roy alors, véant sa constance et grand asseurement de parler, le regarda par manière d'admiration, et contenant sa parolle ung peu au premier mot, lui dict: 'Et je —vous fay chancellier de France: soyez preud'homme." Chastellain, pp. 157, 158.

tongues and discontented faces of his followers. He listened with indignation, but his pride would not permit him to interfere; he disdained to utter reproaches or to become himself a solicitor.[90] He had already begun to appreciate the "new world" into which he had so suddenly entered. The celerity, the indifference, the disregard of friends, the rancour towards fancied foes, which marked all the acts of a reign so recently commenced, excited in Philip's mind a deeper feeling than either wonder or vexation. "I foresee," he remarked to his nephew, the Duke of Bourbon, "that this man will not rule long in peace; he is preparing for himself a marvellously great trouble."[91] He had preferred on his own account only a single complaint—touching the manner in which the Parliament of Paris had been accustomed to exercise its authority in his dominions. Louis, who had already determined to remodel this tribunal, requested that Philip would himself designate discreet and fit persons to receive the appointments. But when the new list came out, it was found that, by some strange oversight, not a single name suggested by the duke had been inserted in it.

Yet it was precisely in his feelings and demeanour towards his fair uncle of Burgundy that Louis had undergone no change in ceasing to be dauphin and becoming king. In their personal interviews he was still the same humble and attached friend as when he had lived upon the duke's bounty and rendered delicate attentions to all the members of his family. His expressions of gratitude were as fluent and fervent as ever. If Philip made a request,—not for himself or his own

[90] Chastellain, p. 156.

[91] Chronique de Dammartin, Lenglet, tom. iii. p. 318.

subjects, but on behalf of the French people, heavily oppressed with taxes, or of some old servant of the late monarch who stood in dread of the royal anger, he was told in reply that he could ask for nothing which the king did not feel himself constrained to grant. He was evidently the man whom Louis delighted to honour. Their names, by an express command, were linked together in the prayers and offices of the church. The keys of the Bastille were presented to the duke, with a request that he would place a garrison of his own in that important fortress. After three weeks spent in the capital Louis prepared to make a progress through Normandy and the other provinces north of the Loire. Before his departure he paid a visit to the Hôtel d'Artois, attended by all the great officers of the government, the prelates, the heads of the University, and the municipality of Paris. In a speech before this dignified assembly he recited all the favours for which he was indebted to the good duke, whom he designated as his benefactor and his saviour. It was in vain that Philip protested against a requital so disproportioned to his "poor services," in which he had only complied with his obligations as a vassal, and through lack of ability had fallen far short of his desires. His disclaimer only drew from Louis a fresh and more detailed enumeration of the benefits he had received, and stronger assurances of his gratitude.[92]

The same scene was repeated, on the following day, without the walls of Paris, whither the king had been escorted by the Burgundian prince and all the nobles of his suite. Their loving and pathetic farewells moved the spectators to tears, and filled the hearts of all

[92] Chastellain, p. 175. — Duclercq, tom. iii. p. 177.

with sympathetic emotions of mingled tenderness and joy.[93]

The king being gone, Philip had no longer any motive for delaying his own return home. Accordingly, on the last day of September he quitted Paris, attended by his faithful followers, whose rueful and angry countenances presented a striking contrast to their former joyous and contented aspect. Less proud or less prudent than their master, the Burgundian nobles made no concealment of their indignation at the treatment which they had experienced. They had, however, one consolation—it was nothing more than they had all along anticipated.[94]

The Count of Charolais, instead of accompanying his father, repaired to Dijon, his native place, which he had not yet visited since his infancy. Though he had played no conspicuous part in public events and ceremonies, during his stay in the capital, he had not been forgotten by the king. He had received the high appointment of Lieutenant-General of Normandy. He was not, indeed, requested to undertake the duties of the office. But he received the salary annexed to it, and was invited to pay a friendly visit to Louis at Tours, where he met with a most gracious reception, and passed nearly a month in an agreeable round of diversions and entertainments.[95] The prospective arrival of the Duke of Brittany, who had not yet paid his respects to his new sovereign, suggested a necessity

[93] "Tant estoit aimable et piteulx leur departement, et tant plaisoit a ceulx qui les veoient, qu'il n'en avoit guerres, d'ung costé ni d'aultre qui illecq estoient a qui le cœur ne ratenrist et ne plouret de joye." Duclercq, tom. iii. p. 178.

[94] "Dont la pluspart . . . dirent bien que autant en avoient-ils bien congneu et doubté en ly dès la première heure." Chastellain, p. 174.

[95] Duclercq, tom. iii. pp. 193-196.

for Charles's departure. The king had reasons of his own for not desiring a meeting, or promoting the formation of a friendly attachment, between these two young princes.[96] The count accordingly took leave, amid renewed assurances of the royal regard. When he and Louis next met and next parted, it was to be on different terms.

[96] Lamarche, tom. ii. p. 230.

CHAPTER IV.

CHARACTER OF LOUIS. — HIS POSITION AND AIMS. — EMBROILMENTS WITH THE NOBLES.

1461 — 1465.

BEFORE his departure from the capital, the king had laid aside his robe and purpoint of satin, and resumed his ordinary attire. He dressed, we are told, "so badly that worse was impossible"[1] — in a doublet of gray fustian, a mantle of the same coarse material cut ridiculously short, and a shabby hat, ornamented not with pearls or diamonds, but with a leaden image of the Virgin, whom he had selected as the first if not the exclusive object of his worship. Round his neck was a rosary composed of large wooden beads, such as were worn by pilgrims.[2]

His exterior, in other respects, could hardly be considered as attractive. His person was lean and ill-shaped. His air and demeanour were anything but courtly or dignified. His features, though full of character, were neither handsome nor pleasing. The eyes, small and keen; the nose, large, prominent, and drooping; the mouth, thin, with the upper lip somewhat projecting; the cheeks and chin, ample but flabby, seemed to indicate a prying, sarcastic, self-complacent, and ignoble mind.[3]

[1] "Si mal que pis ne povoit." Commines, tom. i. p. 166.

[2] Idem, loc. cit. — Chastellain, p. 189. — Duclercq, tom. iv. p. 7.

[3] According to Basin, who paints him on all occasions *en noir*, his per-

His style of living was free from pomp, and frugal even to parsimony.[4] He travelled without state, accompanied by only five or six attendants, but followed, at a distance, by fourscore archers of his guard, who were stationed at night in the immediate vicinity of his lodgings.[5] In entering a town, he avoided, if possible, a public reception—sometimes diverging from the main avenues in order to elude the greetings of the crowd, and generally preferring to take up his quarters with some private citizen or good ecclesiastic rather than at the more stately residence which had been prepared for him.[6]

Wherever he went he was met with the same petition—that he would be graciously pleased to abolish the *taille* and other imposts established in the last reign. This, he declared, was the very project which he had himself had in contemplation. He discoursed in a flattering strain of his desire to do away with the heavy burdens that oppressed the people, and restore the kingdom to its "ancient liberties."[7] But such an object was not to be attained at once. Time was required. Arrangements were necessary. He enjoined patience, and, by way of enforcing the lesson, levied in the meantime some additional taxes.[8]

sonal appearance was that of a leper, and the expression of his countenance that of a buffoon.

[4] During the first year the expenses of the royal table amounted to only 12,000 livres. "En ce temps ne se faisoit que un plat pour le Roi, son trein étoit bien petit en tous États, tellement que ladite somme suffisoit." Duclos, tom. iii. p. 213.

[5] Chastellain, p. 189.

[6] The people at length barred up the side routes, and compelled the king to make his entrance by the principal thoroughfares. Basin, tom. iii. p. 167.

[7] "Nihil nempe tantum in desiderio se habere asserebat, quantum ut populos regni ipsumque regnum ab angariis et immanibus tributorum atque exactionum oneribus, quibus ipsos esse gravatos cognoscebat, levare, et in pristinam atque antiquam libertatem instaurare et restituere posset." Basin, tom. ii. p. 11.

[8] "Il ne diminua nuls subsides,

His "poor subjects," while they listened to his eloquent harangues, imagined that a new era, nay the millennium itself, was about to commence.[9] They were disposed to be clamorous when they found the great event indefinitely postponed. In some places commotions broke out. At Rheims the tax-collectors were massacred, their offices pillaged, and the registers burned. But this soon proved to have been an imprudent procedure. Archers, disguised as labourers, found their way into the town. An officer made his appearance, bearing the king's instructions. The rioters were apprehended and punished. Some had their hands, some their heads, cut off. Others were whipped and banished.

The clergy, who had been greatly edified by the piety of the new monarch, were suddenly astounded by the promulgation of "an impious edict" directing that ecclesiastical property should be taxed in the same proportion as that of laymen. By a still more singular ordinance—levelled, it would seem, at the whole mass of the nobility, whose lands were covered with forests, and who found their chief occupation in the chase—hunting was expressly forbidden throughout the realm of France. Louis was himself the most ardent of sportsmen. Did he desire to monopolize the game for his own amusement? But if he should live to the age of Methusaleh, and apply himself to this sole pursuit, the woods of the royal domain were sufficiently extensive to furnish an inexhaustible supply.[10]

tailles ne gabelles au royaume, ains en mectoit de jour en jour des nouvelles." Duclercq, tom. iv. p. 8.

[9] Or, as Chastellain still more strongly expresses it, "cuidoient avoir trouvé Dieu par les pieds." P. 173.

[10] "Quas, etiam si ipse rex Mathusalem æquaret annos, nec aliud prorsus ageret quam venari, omnes et singulas perlustrare aut exhaurire

At the commencement of his reign the character and actions of Louis seem to have been incorrectly appreciated by his contemporaries. The versatility of his disposition and the eccentricities of his conduct gave rise to a suspicion that he had not been too amply endowed in respect to brain. "Fickleness"—proceeding from want of due discernment and reflection—was the quality generally ascribed to him. A well-meaning man, perhaps, but deficient in depth and solidity of understanding.

On the other hand, the Louis of tradition and of romance is the very incarnation of intellect maliciously and even diabolically active. He is a compound of cunning and cruelty. He is a tyrant of the most detestable species, deliberately exerting his power as an engine of evil, not merely indifferent to the calamities of others, but delighting to produce those calamities, and gloating over the misery of his victims. His very name, and all the associations connected with it, inspire us with horror. His familiar, the barber Olivier le Mauvais, popularly known as "Olivier le Diable," creeps with stealthy foot and downcast eye through the crowd of courtiers, who recede before him, unwilling that even their garments should come in contact with his person. His trusty agent, the Provost-Marshal Tristan l'Hermite, issues from the royal chamber, and is watched with a secret horror by those who gather from his malignant looks the nature of the mission on which he has been despatched.[11] The king's

venationibus minime posset." Basin, tom. ii. p. 75.—It has been conjectured, however, that Louis intended by this ordinance to give a stimulus to the destruction of the forests and the consequent progress of agriculture.

[11] It is worthy of remark how little is actually known of these two personages, and how seldom their names are mentioned in the memoirs and

favourite abode, at Plessis-lez-Tours, is shunned as a habitation of demons. The park is surrounded by deep pits planted with steel-traps. An archer stands behind every tree, with arquebuse unslung, ready to aim at any unauthorized intruder. The vaults beneath the castle, where no ray of daylight ever penetrates, are filled with cages, eight feet square, in each of which a living man has languished through a night of years, bereft of every solace, of every hope. When the morose, suspicious, superstitious king feels a necessity for some amusement, some relaxation of his cares, he descends into this dreary abyss, listens at the doors of the cages, and laughs inwardly as he hears the groans of the wretched captives.

We have called this a representation of tradition and of romance. Yet we cannot deny that it has a strong historical basis. Nay, most of the particulars are in-

documents of the time. M. de Reiffenberg (in a paper in the Mém. de l'Acad. de Belgique) has collected the scattered and meagre facts ascertainable in relation to Olivier le Mauvais, or le Daim,—as he obtained the king's permission, but not the popular consent, to be called,—of which the most interesting is, that he was duly hanged, a few months after his master's death, under a sentence which somewhat vaguely condemns him for his "many great crimes, delinquencies, and malefactions." Of Tristan l'Hermite, whose activity in administering justice by cord and sack is occasionally noticed by the chroniclers, still less is discoverable, so far as concerns the particulars of his career. But a striking portrait is given of him in a letter written, in 1464, by Sir Robert Neville, a kinsman of the Earl of Warwick and his agent in transacting business at the French court. He describes Tristan as "the most diligent, brisk, and keen spirit in the whole kingdom." He warns his correspondent, apparently the governor of Calais, to be on his guard if Tristan should go thither—not to suffer him to speak with any one alone, or to have any opportunity of discovering the weakness of the forts. He will see and understand every thing, the writer adds, and will not forget to report what he has seen to his master. "To say truth, he is a terrible man. Before I knew him I let out many things, but the person you know bid me beware of him." Dupont, Mém. de Commines, tom. iii., preuves, pp. 115-217.

dubitable facts. The cages and the steel-traps, the cunning, the cruelty, the suspicions, the bigotry, are authentically established. But how shall we reconcile with these things the admiration felt and expressed for Louis by the person qualified beyond all others, by more intimate knowledge, superior capacity, and even greater freedom from partiality, to delineate his character? Philippe de Commines pronounces Louis the Eleventh to have been, of all the princes whom he had known, the one who had the fewest vices.[12] By this remark the historian has drawn upon himself the censure of modern writers. Had he been asked for an explanation, he would perhaps have pointed to the fact, that, while with other princes considerations of policy were often rendered inoperative through the influence of passion or of some mental infirmity,—by pride, indolence, folly, or caprice,—Louis scarcely ever deviated from the line of conduct dictated by a clear perception of his interests. In other words, the remark had no reference to moral defects further than these might interfere with the pursuit of ambition and the struggle for power.

And it is in this light that we must examine a career which, viewed in any other, presents a mass of contradictions. In that career we meet with scarcely a single trace of good feeling or of right principle. Yet we see a great and necessary work accomplished. Feudal anarchy is crushed; the imperilled unity of France is secured. And this is effected not with the aid of for-

[12] "Tant ose je bien dire de luy, à son loz, qu'il ne me semble pas que jamais j'aye congneu nul prince, où il y eust moins de vices que en luy." Prologue, p. 3.—"Dieu . . . l'avoit creé plus saige, plus liberal et plus vertueux en toutes choses que les princes qui regnoient avec luy et de son temps." Tom. ii. p. 252.

tune or by a preponderance of strength, but through the efforts of an intellect, ever watchful and never dispirited, contending against enormous difficulties and overwhelming odds—an intellect so keen and so vivacious as to compel our sympathy, and render dormant that aversion which its choice of means would otherwise inspire.

A weak mind with the purest intentions can work nothing but mischief, whatever be the task it undertakes. But a vigorous mind united with a bad heart is not necessarily an instrument of evil. In ceasing to be dauphin and becoming king, Louis had made a greater change of position than was implied by the mere necessity for his throwing off the shackles of his former dependent state. He was now placed in circumstances in which his ambition was no longer a vice, in which his active and subtle genius could move freely without coming continually in conflict with laws to which there was no responsive consciousness in his own nature. He fought against his natural enemies. He punished his rebellious vassals or faithless ministers. He employed stealth and duplicity in a contest in which not merely his own safety, but that of the monarchy, was at stake. He grasped and exalted authority to which no one else had a legitimate claim, which no one else was so fitted to wield.

It deserves to be noticed, too, that, except at the commencement of his reign, when he was still hampered by the mistakes of his earlier career, he made no enemy where it was possible to make a friend. Morally isolated, he was intellectually allied with every mind possessed of talent and adroitness. On persons so endowed he acted as a magnet. He diligently sought them; he

took them wherever he could find them. He raised them from obscurity; he drew them from the ranks of his foes. He spared no pains, he never lost patience, in his endeavours to disarm the opposition or obtain the support of such as had the power to injure or to serve him. He had a boundless confidence in his own powers of persuasion, in his ability to remove prejudice, to soften resentment, to render ductile the character with which he had to deal, not by the constraint of a stronger will, but by gentle and dexterous manipulation. But he did not trust to the specious influence of words alone. He asked no favour for which he was not ready to render a substantial equivalent. Nay, so different was he from most princes, who imagine that they have an unlimited claim to the devotion of their servants, that he chose rather to bestow great rewards for small benefits, gauging men's anticipations as well as their abilities, paying them at their own price as became a generous monarch. "Better," he would say, "to be surrounded by our debtors than by our creditors." [13]

In like manner he strove always to win the sympathy and co-operation of his people—to identify the nation with himself. He appealed to public opinion; he created it. He granted charters liberally to the communes, in order that they might become bulwarks against feudalism. He asked counsel from the representatives of all classes, in order that all might be

[13] He acted on a maxim which the Emperor Charles V. and his other imitators in the sixteenth century seem to have entirely disregarded. "Me dict davantaige que, à son advis, pour avoir biens en court, que c'est plus grant heur à ung homme, quant le prince qu'il sert lui a faict quelque grant bien à peu de desserte (pourquoy il luy demoure fort obligé), que ce ne seroit s'il luy avoit faict ung si grant service que ledict prince luy en fust tres fort obligé; et qu'il ayme plus naturellement ceulx qui luy sont tenuz, qu'il ne faict ceulx à qui il est tenu." Commines, tom. i. p. 305.

committed to the maintenance of his cause. He did not stand aloof from the world, like ordinary despots, seeing nothing, comprehending nothing, devising nothing, seeking no community with the mass of mankind, offering a sullen resistance to the spirit of progress. He did not aspire to be regarded as a god; nor was he content to set in motion a machine. The play of intellect, the conflict of mind with mind, the bustle, the struggles, the cares and anxieties of life, were what he delighted in.

"No man ever lent an ear so readily to others, or inquired about so many matters, or wished to make the acquaintance of so many persons."[14] He was never heard to give that answer which daily fell from the lips of many a petty seigneur whose revenues amounted to a few thousand livres: "Speak to my people; I do not trouble myself about such affairs." He desired to know everything; he forgot nothing.[15] He desired also to be everywhere. He was never at rest; his labours were incessant; "when his body reposed his mind was still at work." "To say truth, a kingdom was too little for him; he was fit to have the government of a world."[16] He had been tutored by adversity, and it was in adversity that his sagacity was most conspicuously displayed.[17] He was never so serene, so cheerful, as when overtaken by misfortune. When he thought himself secure for the moment, he was too apt to let people know the real estimate which he set upon them. His

[14] Commines, tom. i. p. 84.

[15] "Aymoit à demander et entendre de toutes choses. . . . Aussi sa memoire estoit si grande qu'il retenoit toutes choses." Idem, tom. i. p. 158; tom. ii. p. 273.

[16] "A la verité, il sembloit mieulx pour seigneurir ung monde que ung royaulme." Commines, tom. ii. p. 273.

[17] "Jamais je ne congneuz si saige homme en adversité." Idem, tom. i. p. 304.

sarcasms flew nimbly about, and settled upon those who were nearest and tallest, or whose skin was thinnest. He knew and confessed this infirmity. "My tongue," he would say, "has led me into many a scrape; it has also given me much pleasure; however, it is right that I should repair the mischief."

But his greatest fault was his impatience. He had all the craft of a deliberative mind, but all the impulsiveness of a thoughtless one. Time and he were sworn enemies. His foresight was continually running off with him. He defeated his own schemes by putting them prematurely into execution, and precipitated misfortunes by rushing forward to avert them. Such, at least, was the case at the opening of his reign.—But his situation, and that of the monarchy, at this period, will require some further explanation.[18]

[18] Three contemporaries of Louis have described his character from personal knowledge and observation. The portrait drawn by Commines was evidently a labour of love. His own nature strongly sympathized with that of Louis. The acuteness, the subtlety, the eye undazzled by pomp, undimmed by emotion, uncheated by appearances, the nervous vigour, the sarcastic humour, — the *malice*, to adopt his own expressive word, — which distinguish the likeness on the canvas, are also the characteristics of the artist himself. Chastellain, though an enemy, writes with much impartiality, but with far less appreciation. He is the representative of sentiments and ideas which received a fatal shock from the innovations of Louis. He mourns over the disregard of pomp and ceremony, the sceptical and levelling tendencies, the tortuous and aggressive policy, which sullied the fountain of chivalry and honour, and cast a stain upon the *fleurs-de-lys*. But he never forgets the sacredness of royalty; he is guarded in his condemnation; he acknowledges the sagacity and applauds the activity of the French monarch. Basin, on the other hand, treats neither the man nor the office with respect. He assails Louis with the heat of a partizan and the rancour of a personal foe. He excuses himself for having undertaken the task of depicting the reign of the bloody and perfidious tyrant by the example of ancient writers, who have exhibited Caligula, Nero, Domitian, and Commodus as warnings to posterity. Each of these, however, had some redeeming quality. Louis had none. His capacity consisted in his total lack of conscience.

There is, perhaps, no country peopled by different races in which the various elements have been so blended, the original distinctions of language, blood, and custom so nearly obliterated, as in France. The germs, too, of political unity, without which even identity of race does not constitute a nation, had, as we have noticed in a former chapter, been implanted at a very early period. The throne established by Clovis, although it passed from one dynasty to another, and was often occupied by princes who exercised no authority over the greater portion of the kingdom, was never overthrown, and had gradually acquired a claim to the allegiance and submission of the whole country. Its foundations were strengthened and extended during several successive ages; and, had it not been for the disturbing influence of the English wars, monarchical power in France would have broken down all the barriers that opposed its progress at a period anterior to that of our history. In these struggles for its existence it lost much of the ground which it had gained. It could not resist, it was even forced to encourage, the reactionary tendencies of feudalism. The mass of the nobility, it is true, were greatly weakened by the disasters of this period—by the general impoverishment of the country, as well as by the bloody defeats of Poitiers and Azincourt. But the great feudatories, profiting alike by the decline or extinction of many noble families, and by the weakness of the crown, extended their dominions, and rose to a degree of power and independence that threatened to undo the work of centuries.

We have seen the position occupied by Philip the Good. Besides his feudal sovereignty over Burgundy,

Flanders, Artois, and other important fiefs, he had obtained possession, by the treaty of Arras, of the most important places in Picardy. The house of Anjou was far less powerful; but it had added to its original domains Provence, Lorraine, and Bar, and it derived a certain degree of lustre from its claims to the kingdom of Sicily. Brittany had always been untractable. In that great province the amalgamation of races—that fusion of various elements by which the national character was formed—had made but little progress. There the ancient language of Gaul was still in common use, and Celtic customs and institutions still maintained their vigour. The sovereign acknowledged a very limited dependence on the French crown. He entitled himself "duke by the grace of God;" he denied the appellate jurisdiction of the Parliament of Paris, and he refused to take the oath of allegiance in the usual form, or to be called the liegeman of the king of France.

South of Brittany, Guienne had but recently been recovered from the English; whose rule had been popular both with the nobility and with the towns. On the north, between Brittany and Picardy, was the great province of Normandy—the heritage of the Plantagenets, associated with the glory of the English conquerors, filled with the memorials of their sway, twice wrested from their grasp, to be yet, perhaps, for the second time, regained.

All the provinces of the sea-coast, on the west and on the north, were either practically independent of the crown or attached to it by new and feeble ties. France was in the condition of a fortress, whose outworks are already in the hands of the foe or manned by garrisons of doubtful fidelity. Louis the Eleventh had ascended

the throne only a few years after the conclusion, or what might rather be regarded as the temporary cessation, of a war—itself the sequel of former wars similar in origin and in results—during which the fate of France had been suspended in a trembling balance. Nothing was more probable than another alliance between the foreign enemy and the haughty and uncertain friend, to be followed by another invasion, another conquest. In the very year in which Louis began his reign, the crown of England, after what seemed the final defeat of the Lancastrians, had been placed upon the head of a prince, young, brave, ambitious, fond of war, the descendant by an elder branch of Edward the Third, the friend and companion in arms of Warwick. What surer way for the new sovereign to establish his dynasty, to ground himself in the affections of his people, than by emulating the achievements which were still that people's proudest boast?

Charles the Seventh, reared in the midst of convulsions, but little inclined by disposition to a life of conflict and of turmoil, had been content to provide against the dangers and difficulties of the hour, and to purchase immediate relief by concessions that were fraught with future peril. The restless, adventurous, far-sighted, but inexperienced Louis saw nothing but weakness and insecurity in the position bequeathed to him by his father. There could be no safety for France while the towns on the Somme remained in possession of the duke of Burgundy; or, if the loyalty and peaceful inclinations of Philip were a pledge of safety, the more reason for seeking restitution before Philip's rights were transmitted with his power to a prince of a different character. The towns of the Somme were the necessary defences

of the capital. How was it possible for the king to live tranquilly in Paris while a vassal over whom he exercised no control was posted at Amiens?

Here, then, was the breach that required to be closed before any further measures were attempted. Louis, from the moment of his accession, had fixed his eyes upon these towns. It had been stipulated by the treaty that they should be surrendered on the payment of four hundred thousand crowns. But no guaranty had been given by which to enforce compliance with this stipulation. It could hardly be imagined that a proposal to redeem them would be met in any other way than by evasion. It was even believed that Charles the Seventh had given a verbal promise that he would not demand their restitution during Philip's lifetime. Nevertheless Louis was determined that they should be restored. And here it seemed that his early misfortunes—his exile and long residence in the Netherlands—had not been wholly without compensating benefits. His friendship with Philip, his intimate acquaintance with the character of the duke and of the members of his family and court, might now stand him in good stead. Perhaps at this moment he wished that he had shown himself somewhat more complying to his fair uncle during the latter's visit to Paris; that he had been less lavish of fine words, and less thrifty of substantial gratitude. Yet in one instance he had not been ungrateful. It does not appear that he had ever received any service from the Croys; but to them he had been grateful in anticipation. He had not forgotten that, however he might treat the duke himself, it was not politic to slight the duke's favourites. He had bestowed a valuable estate upon Antony de Croy, and had given him a prospective claim to the grand-

mastership of France, the highest post in the royal household. He now took the whole family under his protection. He loaded the younger members of it with benefactions. He made John de Croy his councillor and chamberlain. They were led to perceive that, however weighty their obligations to their own sovereign, it was no bad thing to have the friendship of a king of France.

Their disposition to serve him being thus secured, it remained to be seen whether they had the power—whether their influence with the duke would extend so far as to lead him to abandon an advantage the immense value of which he could hardly have failed to appreciate. Philip was now approaching the verge of what has been assigned as the duration of human life. His constitution was good; but he had never practised the severe rules by which his son's iron frame preserved its uniform vigour. His health had been seriously impaired by the banquets and festivities in which he had indulged, with even more than his usual freedom, during his visit to Paris; and, after his return, in the spring of 1462, he had a long and dangerous illness. The public anxiety, on this occasion afforded the strongest proof of his popularity. The good duke, who was only harsh and severe when his commands were disputed, when his fiery temper was roused,—whose gay and sumptuous tastes had furnished the Netherlanders with a constant succession of *fêtes*, and given the lustre of the most brilliant court in Christendom to their commercial capital,—was not to be suffered to leave them if supplications to heaven could avail. There was no end of prayers and processions, in which the inhabitants of every rank and age took part. During his convales-

cence his physicians ordered his head to be shaved; and his complaisant courtiers hastened to make a similar change in their appearance. If any of the younger nobles hesitated to part with their curling locks, officers appointed for the purpose seized the unwilling youths whenever they showed themselves in public, and compelled them to undergo the prescribed operation on the spot.[19] The Duchess Isabella, informed of her husband's situation, had left her conventual retreat to attend upon him; and the Count of Charolais, during several successive nights, watched by his bedside with affectionate solicitude. In his intervals of consciousness the duke remonstrated with his son, and urged him to take necessary repose. "Better," he said, "that one should die than both; better that I should go than you."[20] After some months' confinement to his chamber he was able to resume his ordinary mode of life.

But the pith and vigour of his life were gone. He was growing old; and the world around him, stirred by a new influence, instead of declining with his decline, or lapsing into stillness in order that he, so long its paragon and arbiter, might end his days in comfort and tranquillity, was becoming agitated and turbulent. The war between the Count of Charolais and the Croys, notwithstanding the gracious endeavours of Louis to effect a reconciliation, blazed forth openly and fiercely. The country, as well as the court, was filled with its clamours. Their connection with the king had thrown fresh odium on the favourites, and increased the diffi-

[19] Lamarche, tom. iii. p. 227.—"Se trouvèrent plus de cinq cens nobles hommes qui pour l'amour du duc se firent raire, comme luy."

[20] Duclercq, tom. iii. p. 205.—He adds, "Toutesfois sondit fils ne le voullut oncques laisser; ains quant son pere le cuidoit reposant, il estoit toujours autour de lui qu'il ne le veoit point."

culties of their position. They were still powerful enough to resist the attacks directed against themselves, but they were less able to ward off those which were directed against their adherents. One of the duke's chamberlains was tried and put to death on a charge of having conspired against Charles's life. The next blow was aimed at a higher mark. John of Burgundy, Count of Nevers, a grandson of Philip the Bold, had ranged himself on the side of the ministers, instigated by some private disputes with Charles, by an old enmity with the count of Saint-Pol, and, as was commonly suspected, by an ambition loftier than was consistent with his legitimate pretensions or with his chances of succeeding to the sovereignty of the Burgundian dominions. The charge, however, openly preferred against him was of a darker nature. He was accused of having in his house three waxen figures, on which he practised, with the assistance of an apostate monk, certain diabolical incantations—his supposed object being to obtain for himself the favour of the French king and the Duke of Burgundy, and to cause the Count of Charolais to waste away and perish by a lingering death.[21] This was a common form of sorcery, in practice as well as in belief.[22] Nevers, instead of awaiting his trial by the Golden Fleece, threw up his appointments, and retired

[21] Duclercq, tom. iii. p. 236, et seq. Lenglet, tom. ii. p. 392.

[22] The story of Elinor Cobham, wife of the "good Duke Humphrey," furnishes a parallel case, about twenty years earlier. But more than twenty years later, another Duke of Gloucester (Richard III.) made a similar accusation against "that witch" his brother's widow. Mackintosh justly remarks that "the sorcerers themselves doubtless trusted as much the potent malignity of their own spells as other men dreaded them." Necromancy was not merely an art or a profession, but a creed. Its votaries composed a sect, held private assemblies for worship, and offered masses to Satan. A minute description of these blasphemous rites is given by Llorente, Hist. de l'Inquisition, tom. ii. pp. 432-443.

into France; while Charles, foiled in some further attempts against his enemies, sullenly withdrew from the court, and took up his residence at the castle of Gorcum, on the coast of Holland.

Advantage was taken of his absence, and of his father's enfeebled condition, to carry out the scheme for the redemption of the mortgaged towns. By what arguments the Croys were enabled to win the consent of Philip we are not informed. The string on which they played was doubtless his desire to maintain his present peaceful relations with the French monarch. Now that his faculties were on the wane, he was fain to purchase by concessions the continuance of that peace which had been purchased of him, by the like concessions, when his faculties were in their prime. Or he may have doubted the king's ability to furnish the required sum. But hardly had his compliance been extorted when half the amount was placed in his hands, and his written promise obtained that the towns should be given up on the payment of the remainder. It was not in the character of Louis to relax in the pursuit of any object till it was definitely secured. Yet to raise on the instant two hundred thousand gold crowns was, in the fifteenth century, no easy matter even for a king of France. The resources of his exchequer were exhausted; there were no capitalists ready, or indeed able, to advance the money upon his simple bond. Yet he could not believe that every one was not as anxious as himself to complete the transaction, so necessary for the security of the kingdom, so liable to be defeated by delay. He refused to listen to the doubts and demurs started by the officers of the treasury. "He told us," writes a bewildered functionary to a colleague, "that

there were people in Paris who would lend the money, and that, in such a case as this, ten thousand livres might be found in one place, and thirty thousand in another. These were all the instructions we could get from him; and he sent us off with so little deliberation that we had scarce time to draw on our boots."[23] Nor did this irregular mode of conducting business, embarrassing as it was for the poor treasurers, fail of the desired results. There was no resisting the whirlwind which Louis had set in motion. Some of the wealthy religious establishments, and several towns which had received from the king an extension of their privileges, were found willing to contribute. As a last resort, violent hands were laid upon a fund in the possession of the Parliament—the property of widows and orphans, preserved, as in an inviolable sanctuary, in the vaults of Notre Dame.[24] Within a month after the payment of the first instalment, on October 8, 1463, the astonished and reluctant creditor was called upon to sign a receipt in full. "Croy, Croy," he was heard to mutter, "it is hard to serve two masters."[25]

In fact, the Croys, led onward by their adroit tempter, had become entangled in a labyrinth of dangers and perplexities. Their quarrel with the Count of Charolais —originally a mere private matter, a family dispute, which Philip alone was competent to decide—had now become an affair of public policy, in which the subjects of the duke, the people of Flanders and of Artois, who by the surrender of Picardy had lost their frontier

[23] Lettre du Sieur Chevalier, Lenglet, tom. ii. p. 400.

[24] Basin (tom. ii. cap. 21) seizes upon this act as a theme for vehement declamation. The "forced loan" was, however, repaid with interest. All governments have not been as honest.

[25] Chastellain, p. 266.—The documents relative to the redemption of the mortgaged towns may be found in Lenglet, tom. ii. pp. 392-403.

defences, could not fail to take an interest. At their request, Charles had sent two of the principal members of his household to remonstrate with his father against the step which he was about to take. He had also sent a message to the king, begging him to desist, for the present at least, from his intentions. These appeals proving fruitless, it followed, as a necessary result, that the relations between Charles and Louis began to assume a clear and determinate shape. Both parties might still dissemble; but it was impossible that either of them should henceforth be deceived. Up to this time the king had never ceased to profess the strongest affection for his fair cousin. No ordinary friendship could satisfy the warmth of his feelings. Charles was "the person in all the world whom he loved the best and whom he trusted the most"—his chosen counsellor and confidant, "by whose sole advice he was resolved to be guided."[26] Who was the man at the French court admitted to the closest intimacy by Louis, employed by him on the most delicate missions, having access to his chamber at all hours whether the king were awake or asleep? No other than Guillaume Biche, the former servant and still the constant visitor of the Count of Charolais.[27] "You and your Biche must confer upon this matter,—you and no third one,—and give the king your advice," was a message sent to the count so late as in April of this year (1463).[28]

[26] "Le Roy, ainsi qu'il le m'escript se veult conduire . . . . par vous seul et non par autre. . . . . Vous estes la personne de tout le monde qu'il ayme le mieulx, et en qui il se fye le plus." Lettre de Charles de Melun au Comte de Charolais, Dupont, Mém. de Commines, tom. iii. preuves, p. 200.

[27] "Avoient les sergens et huissiers d'armes et tous aultres de la chambre exprès commandement du Roy que, à toutte heure, feust nuyt, feust jour, feust le Roy couchié ou endormy, on lui ouvrist la chambre sans contredict." Chastellain, p. 163.

[28] Dupont, Mém. de Commines, ubi supra.

And yet from the first Charles could never have been altogether blinded by such professions. The great fear entertained by Louis was that of a secret alliance between the heir of the Burgundian dominions and the Duke of Brittany. He had yielded the point in dispute as to the form in which the duke should do homage for his fief. Then, to give him a mark of his confidence, he appointed him to a post. And to what post? That of Lieutenant and Governor of Normandy, the same which he had already conferred upon the Count of Charolais. Not that he revoked the appointment of the latter; he left the matter to be settled between the parties, or rather to become a source of mutual jealousy and animosity. But a very different result ensued. In this instance, if the design of Louis were not apparent, there could be no doubt of his insincerity; and it was not long before envoys and friendly messages began to pass between the coasts of Brittany and Holland.

Louis had, in fact, been obliged to choose between the friendship of the Croys and that of the Count of Charolais. He could not hesitate between the two. The advantages were in the one case immediate, in the other only prospective. But this was not the chief consideration that decided him. The ministers might be purchased with honours and emoluments—gifts which he could well afford to bestow. But the heir of Burgundy and the Netherlands, the great feudal chieftain, would be satisfied only by the renunciation of a line of policy the pursuit of which must be the sole motive of Louis in courting any man's friendship. Their interests, in short, were incompatible; their hostility was inevitable. Louis, it is true, was provided with an armoury of blandishments—fair promises and flattering

speeches. But Charles was precisely the man on whom such weapons had no effect. His was a most impracticable character. The king perceived it to be so, and threw away the useless mask. He stopped the payment of Charles's pension. He placed the government of the newly recovered towns in the hands of the Count of Nevers. He made strenuous efforts to gain over the Count of Saint-Pol. He encouraged Philip to believe that his son had rebellious designs against him. He endeavoured, in short, to put his enemy in a state of complete isolation.

Yet there was one tie which it was impossible for the king to sever. The Duke of Brittany stood in the same position towards him as the Count of Charolais. And Louis was tormented with the apprehension that this alliance would be opened to admit a third party—that the vessels which carried messages between Brittany and Holland would soon have occasion to stop at England in their way. What, at this time, therefore, chiefly occupied his thoughts, was the means of negotiating at once a solid treaty with Edward the Fourth. Such a treaty, he well knew, was not to be obtained by mere formal methods of diplomacy. A private interview between himself and Warwick seemed to him an indispensable preliminary. The "king-maker" was supposed to exercise an unbounded influence with his king. It would go hard but Louis would find the means of obtaining an influence with the "king-maker." Warwick had engaged to meet him, but, detained in England by other affairs, failed to keep the appointment. He promised, however, if further delayed, to send his brother, the Bishop of Exeter, in his place. Lingering in Picardy, in anxious expectation of the arrival of the earl or his deputy, Louis found leisure to pay a visit to

the Duke of Burgundy at Hesdin, in the neighbouring province of Artois. He intended, probably, to bring Philip into the alliance. At all events, he knew the importance of nursing his present friendly relations with the duke by those flattering attentions which Philip loved to receive and which Louis knew so well how to bestow.

The castle of Hesdin was a favourite summer residence of the Burgundian sovereign. By a stranger, who accidentally found himself within its walls, it might have been mistaken for the haunt of whimsical and malicious genii. Its principal gallery was a complete museum of *diableries*, being secretly surrounded by ingenious mechanical contrivances for putting into operation the broadest practical jokes. The unsuspicious visitor found himself performing, quite involuntarily, the part of Pantaloon. If he laid his hand upon any article of furniture, he was saluted with a shower of spray, besmeared with soot, or bepowdered with flour. When a numerous company were assembled, the ceiling, painted and gilded in imitation of the starry sky, would be suddenly overcast; a snow-storm followed, or a torrent of rain accompanied by thunder and lightning. The water even ascended by fountains through the floor, for the especial discomfort of the ladies.[29] The guests, attempting to escape, only plunged into fresh embarrassments. If they sought egress by the door, they had to cross a trap, which, being suddenly withdrawn, dropped them into a bath, or into a large sack filled with feathers. If they opened a window, they were blinded by jets of water, and the aperture closed

[29] "Partout dessoubz le pavement aultres conduitz et engiens pour moullier les dames par dessoubz." Laborde, Les Ducs de Bourgogne (Preuves), tom. i. p. 271.

again with a violent noise. Meanwhile they were pursued by masked figures, who pelted them with little balls, or belaboured them with sticks.[30] It is not probable that Louis—although the approaches to his own castle at Tours presented a much more serious ordeal—was compelled personally to contribute to the amusement of his host by undergoing a reception of this kind; but we may well believe that no one would have witnessed the exhibition at another's expense with more hearty enjoyment.

His visit afforded Philip a welcome opportunity for the indulgence of his hospitable inclinations. Every day he gave a splendid entertainment, followed in the evening by a ball. But Louis, though not deficient in social powers, had no strong passion for brilliant gaieties. He preferred the pleasure of a quiet conversation with his fair uncle, in which he sometimes played his old part, and entertained the duke with lively sallies or allusions to well remembered scenes, and sometimes turned the discussion to more important topics.

One day, while they were riding together in the forest, he suggested that Philip should intrust him with the charge of compelling the Count of Charolais to

[30] A full description of these "ouvrages de joyeuseté et plaisance"—as they are termed by the inventor, Colart le Voleur, in a receipt for his yearly salary—may be found in Laborde, Ducs de Bourgogne (Preuves), tom. i. pp. 268-271. And see tom. ii. p. 213.

Caxton, in the prologue to his translation of Raoul Lefevre's 'Life of Jason,' finds a symbolical meaning in these fantastic performances, which he himself had probably witnessed. "Duc Philippe . . . dyd' doo maken a chambre in the Castell of Hesdyn, where in was craftyly and' curiously depeynted the conqueste of the golden flese by the sayd' Jason, in which chambre I have ben and seen the sayd historie so depeynted. & in remembraūce of medea & of her connyng & science, he had do make in the sayde chambre by subtil engyn that whan he wolde it shuld seme that it lightend & then thondre, snowe & rayne. And all' with'in the sayde chambre as ofte tymes & whan it shuld' please him. which' was al made for his singuler pleasir."

return to his father's court and submit to his father's authority. He had previously, through an indirect channel, given a hint to the same effect.[31] The proposal, which had before remained unanswered, was now civilly declined, on the ground that such matters were of too trifling a nature to occupy the attention of so great a prince. The king, however, persisted in his assurances of the pleasure he should feel in undertaking the commission, and of the ease with which he could execute it. "*Par la Pasque-Dieu*," he said, "I will engage, whether he be in Holland or in Friesland, to find the means of making him listen to reason. What say you, fair uncle?" His pertinacity may have had the effect of recalling to Philip's mind a train of events which had certainly slipped from his own memory. After his early troubles had been brought to a happy conclusion by his father's death, Louis seems ever to have regarded with a peculiar horror any example brought under his notice of filial disobedience. The duke, thus pressed, assumed at length an air of haughty reserve, and replied, with emphasis, "Monseigneur, my son is—MY SON; and I will treat him as such. And, though he may choose to absent himself from me at present, I am well convinced that, had I occasion for his services, he would come to me at once." Then, under pretext of giving due precedence to his sovereign, he slackened his rein, and fell into conversation with the gentlemen of his suite."[32]

[31] "Dira à mondit Sieur de Bourgogne que le Roy a sceu les entreprises que M. de Charolais son fils fait à l'encontre de luy, dont il a esté et est fort desplaisant, et qu'il est conclud et deliberé de ayder, secourir et favoriser mondit Sieur de Bourgogne à l'encontre de M. de Charolais de tout son pouvoir, sans espargner corps ne bien, et qu'il luy semble qu'en bien peu de temps la chose sera mise à fin et conclusion," &c. Instruction à Maistre Estienne Chevalier, Lenglet, tom. ii. p. 393.

[32] Chastellain, p. 272.

Louis was not a man to be disconcerted by a rebuff of this kind. It was his favourite maxim that "when Pride rides before, Misfortune follows fast behind." [33] After his departure from Hesdin he sent his queen, and her sister the Princess of Piedmont, to spend a few days with the duke. This well-timed courtesy restored Philip to his accustomed good-humour. It delighted him to exhibit to these illustrious ladies a scene of gaiety and splendour to which they were wholly unaccustomed; to sit beside them on a dais while the glittering bevy of dames and cavaliers passed before them in the circling dance; to watch the ecstasy with which they were inspired, and listen to their soft complaints as they drew a comparison between this paradise and the home to which they were too soon to return. Never, they exclaimed, had they known what pleasure was till now, and seven years hence they should still look back upon this time with infinite regret. Their ladies also whispered to each other that a single day of such enjoyment was worth a whole existence at the court of France.[34]

But this amiable state of feeling between the king and his great vassal was destined to be of short continuance. A *coup-de-théatre* was at hand—a transformation as sudden and surprising as the thunderstorms and pitfalls set in operation by the hidden enginery in the gallery at Hesdin.

In September, 1464, there arrived, one day, at the port of Gorcum, in Holland, a small bark, of peculiar

[33] Commines, tom i. p. 147.

[34] Chastellain, p. 314.—One is tempted into minute details of this kind by the garrulity of the Burgundian chroniclers. Old servants of an illustrious house, they are listened to with patience and sympathy while they dilate upon its former grandeur and faded glories. But we soon weary of the modern cicerone, telling a tale which he has learned by rote and in which his own feelings are little interested.

swiftness, having a crew of fifty men. The commander alone went on shore, and, entering a tavern, fell into conversation with the hostess and other persons, in the course of which he made many inquiries about the habits of the Count of Charolais, how often he was accustomed to make excursions on the water, at what hours and with what escort he went abroad, and in what directions. Having discussed these subjects in a tone of assumed carelessness, the merchant—for such he professed himself to be—quitted the hostelry, and rambled towards the outskirts of the town. When he reached the castle, which was now inhabited by the count and his family, he examined it attentively, and at length climbed upon the wall and directed his glances towards the sea. While making this survey he became aware that he was himself closely watched by a number of persons who had gathered near the spot. As he prepared to return the throng increased; and, although no violence was offered to him, he became alarmed, and took sanctuary in a neighbouring church.[35]

It was not merely his inquisitiveness, not unnatural in a stranger, which had excited suspicion. He had been recognized as the Bastard of Rubempré—an illegitimate member of a noble family in Flanders, who had belonged formerly to the household of Charles, but had since taken service under the Count of Nevers. He was, in fact, a well known adventurer—one of those landless cavaliers who sought their fortune under any standard, and were ready to engage in any enterprise.[36]

[35] Chastellain, p. 335.—Duclercq, tom. iv. p. 66.—Lenglet, tom. ii. p. 421.—Extract from a manuscript narrative in Le Glay, Catalogue Descriptif des MSS. de la Bibliothéque de Lille.

[36] "Ledict bastard estoit homme defaict, courageux et entreprenant." Lamarche, tom. ii. p. 232.

Information of his proceedings was immediately conveyed to Charles. The vessel was seized; but the mariners, who after the departure of their commander had dispersed along the shore, succeeded in making their escape. Rubempré, on being questioned, gave contradictory replies. No confession of a hostile purpose was extorted from him; but public conjecture easily supplied the lack of certain information.[37] An attempt had been intended to kidnap the Count of Charolais. The leader in this enterprise was the Bastard of Rubempré, his employer the Count of Nevers. Therefore the author of the plot could be no other than the king—the patron of Nevers, the avowed enemy of Charles. In this definite shape the rumour flew through the country, exciting the loyal indignation of the people, and serving as a text for the highly seasoned discourses of the itinerant friars, who in the fifteenth century exercised those functions of censorship and criticism on the topics of the day which are now exercised with equal zeal and equal infallibility by the public journalists.

Instead of subsiding, the popular excitement speedily assumed a new form—that of alarm for the safety of a person still more important, still more dear, than he who was one day to become the ruler of the Netherlands. The duke was then at Hesdin—having remained there longer than usual at the request of Louis, who proposed to honour him before his departure with another visit. The king in Picardy, busily engaged with Nevers—in what?—scheming, plotting, raising

[37] Duclercq, however, asserts that Rubempré made a full confession. According to the narrative in Le Glay, papers were found in his possession bearing the signature of the king, and promising a reward for the capture of the Count of Charolais.

troops, no doubt, waiting for intelligence that the Count of Charolais was in his power;—Philip close upon the frontier, at a strong but exposed town, unprotected by his faithful lieges, unsuspicious of danger, ready to welcome the wily guest for whom he stayed and any escort—any armed force rather—which he might see fit to bring with him:[38]—here was a conjunction of suspicious circumstances that might well set the most sluggish imagination at work. While the members of Philip's household were discussing the subject and communicating their fears to one another, a message came to him, on a Saturday, from the king, who had already postponed his visit much beyond the appointed time, but who now engaged to arrive at Hesdin on the following Monday, and begged his fair uncle not to take his departure till then. The messenger remained at the castle all night. Philip said nothing of his intentions to any of his nobles; but, after he had retired to rest, he desired his valet to give the necessary orders for his departure on the morrow. In the morning Antony de Croy and his nephew, the Lord of Quiévrain, were astonished at finding the courtyard filled with horses, and all the preparations completed for the removal of the court. They silently joined the train, which was already in motion. As it passed through the gates of the town, the magistrates presented themselves, and requested Philip's instructions as to putting the place in a state of defence and forbidding the entrance of strangers. "We are not at war," replied the duke. "Guard the town as usual; and if the king should arrive, receive him with all proper respect."[39]

[38] "Et y devoit mener avecques lui, ce disoit-on, sa grande garde." Chastellain, p. 342.

[39] Chastellain, p. 344.

These tidings were a thunder-clap to Louis. Had he ever conceived the designs imputed to him? Had he imagined so monstrous an act of treachery as the seizure of the Duke of Burgundy and his only legitimate son, to be followed up by the establishment, under some thin disguise of a protectorate, of his own authority over a people rendered helpless by panic and dismay? The supposition may appear incredible, but it was not so regarded at the time; and the opinions of contemporaries are formed in the presence of a combination of circumstances which lose much of their importance when merely reviewed in detail. It is at least plain that the real objects of the king's insidious proceedings had been to reduce the Burgundian sovereign to a state of tutelage, to obtain complete control over his dominions, and to deprive the heir to those dominions of his present, if not of his prospective, rights.[40] An attempt to effect the same purpose by stealthy violence was repugnant neither to his own character nor to that of the age. Examples and precedents, more or less pertinent, were still fresh in the popular recollection. The assassination of the last Burgundian sovereign, in the presence, and with the supposed connivance, of the dauphin, furnished, if not a parallel case, some points of analogy of especial interest to those who took the most active share in the discussion. But another transaction, of very recent date, was still more to the purpose, since it was one in which Louis himself had been the principal actor, and in which he had played precisely the part he had

[40] According to Chastellain, he had personally proposed to Philip, at Hesdin, to relieve him of the cares of government; and the language already quoted, of his instructions to the Sire Chevalier, as well as his whole course of conduct, leaves no doubt of his hostile intentions with regard to Charles.

lately volunteered to perform in the domestic drama enacting at the Burgundian court.

His father-in-law, the Duke of Savoy, was a person of feeble intellect, steeped in the grossest sensuality, and in affairs of government a puppet in the hands of his more ambitious and more masculine wife. She, a foreigner by birth, had disgusted the nobility by placing her own countrymen in the highest and most lucrative posts. A powerful party had been formed against her, headed by one of her sons, the Count of Bresse. She had been compelled to flee the country, and, with her imbecile husband, had taken refuge at the court of Louis, and invoked his assistance against their rebellious son. To an appeal of this nature Louis was never deaf. It touched the most sensitive cord in his sympathizing bosom. By the proffer of his mediation, and on the guaranty of a safe-conduct, he had induced the Count of Bresse to cross the frontier for the purpose of pleading his cause in person at the French court. No sooner had the young prince entered the French territory than he found himself a prisoner. He had been hurried off to the fortress of Loches, near Tours,—a convenient and secure, but damp and sombre, abode,—where he was still rigidly immured. The decision of the affair had been postponed. The duke, and his eldest son, who resembled him in character, were detained in France, where the former received a pension and where the latter had previously found a wife. Louis had selected as a suitable helpmate for the heir of Savoy his own sister, the Princess Yolande, whose penetration and natural talent for affairs had won for her the largest share of his fraternal regard. When the old sovereign, whose incapacity was notorious, should disappear from the stage,

his successor, equally incapable, but provided with a competent guardian, might be instated in his rights. Meanwhile the king himself, in virtue of his position as arbiter, and by means of agents as trusty and as serviceable as the Croys, administered the government of Savoy.

It was impossible to feel any remorse for so successful a piece of statecraft; but what could be more annoying to the king than to know that this occurrence was universally accepted by an indiscriminating public as conclusive proof of his having planned a still bolder scheme, from which, if it succeeded, he might hope to derive far more important benefits. It so happened that the Count of Bresse was the godson and namesake of the Duke of Burgundy, who had vainly solicited his restoration to liberty. The incident had made a deep impression upon Philip's mind; and now he had plainly shown, by his premature departure from Hesdin, how strongly his mistrust had been excited in regard to the king's good faith. Louis had at first affected to treat the calumnious rumour with disdain. "He knew nothing of the Bastard of Rubempré—had never before heard of his existence."[41] For himself, he had never done, spoken, or even thought anything prejudicial to the house of Burgundy. His obligations to that house were engraven on his heart "as on marble."[42] He was most anxious, however, for the suppression of the scandal, and commanded that all persons who discussed the subject in taverns or elsewhere should be arrested and punished. He also caused a

[41] Chastellain, p. 339.

[42] "Car le Roy congnoissoit bien les grans biens et plaisirs que monseigneur de Bourgogne lui avoit fait quant il estoit dolphin, et avoit ce emprimé et empraint en son cueur comme en marbre, et en l'oublirait jamais." Discours du chancelier aux échevins d'Amiens, Dupont, Mém. de Commines, tom. iii. preuves, p. 209.

message to be sent by the admiral of France to Antony de Croy, begging him to exert his influence to disabuse Philip's mind, and to have Rubempré quietly set at liberty and suffered to leave the Netherlands.

But the Croys had long been in a position which seemed to render it inevitable that their influence at the Burgundian court should decline with that of the king himself. They had so openly committed themselves to the support of the royal interests, that even Philip, when he once began to regard Louis as an enemy, could not but look coldly on them. In the general opinion they were as deeply implicated in this affair as the king. Rubempré was their relative; their intimacy with Nevers was as notorious as their hostility to Charles. They were at this moment plunged in the deepest anxiety on their own account, and disposed to curse the hour when they had linked their fortunes with those of a restless schemer, the extent and desperate nature of whose speculations were known only to himself. "My friend," said Antony to the admiral's messenger, "go back to your master, and tell him that those who have brewed this mixture may drink of it. It shall be no affair of mine." [43]

Thus deprived of the co-operation on which he had relied for enabling him to escape from his present difficulty by the underhand management which he would have preferred, Louis found it necessary to assume the lofty tone more becoming in a great monarch. He expressed his haughty indignation at the presumption of the Count of Charolais, who had arrested and brought to trial on so frivolous a charge the servant and officer of his sovereign. For he now admitted that Rubempré had

[43] Chastellain, p. 338.

been despatched upon his business—his orders being to intercept the Chancellor of Brittany, sent on a treasonable mission to England, whence he was instructed to cross over to Holland, and communicate the result to the Count of Charolais.

A special embassy, consisting of the Chancellor Morvilliers, the Archbishop of Narbonne, and the Count of Eu, the head of the house of Artois, arrived at Lille, about the beginning of November, to make these representations to the Duke of Burgundy. In the solemn audience to which they were admitted, in the presence of the Count of Charolais and of the whole court, the ambassadors opened the proceedings with a long and artful harangue setting forth the treasonable designs of the Duke of Brittany, and leaving the same imputations to rest by a natural construction upon Charles, the duke's friend and firm ally. What, they asked, was the object of this alliance, if it were not directed against the king? They sneered at the count's "suspicious temper," which had allowed him to give credence to the absurd suggestion of a design against his person. They were at a loss, they said, to understand the motives of his avowed enmity to their master, unless it was to be attributed to chagrin at the withdrawal of his pension.

It was impossible that the fiery spirit against whom these insinuations were directed should hear them patiently or in silence. Starting to his feet, Charles broke in upon the orator with fierce exclamations. "My lord of Charolais," was the cool reply, "we have no commission to discuss these matters with you; we are here to treat with your father on behalf of our dread lord the king." Flinging himself passionately at Philip's feet, Charles besought his permission to refute

the calumnies which had been heaped upon him. The duke commanded him to have patience, telling him that he should be allowed to answer the envoys at length upon the following day. The chancellor, who acted as the spokesman of the embassy, then proceeded with his address. He expressed his regret that Philip should have been so moved by idle and malicious reports as to forfeit the promise which he had made to the king to wait for him at Hesdin. He concluded by making three demands: that Rubempré should be immediately set at liberty; that Olivier de Lamarche, a servant of the Count of Charolais, accused of having first set the scandalous rumour afloat, should be sent into France, to receive such punishment as was meet for traducing the honour of the king; and that the friars who had declaimed upon so delicate a topic in the pulpits of Bruges —a city frequented by strangers of every nation, where nothing transpired that was not speedily communicated to all parts of Christendom—should likewise be delivered up.

When the chancellor had finished, the Count of Eu, a prince of blunt demeanour but unimpeachable integrity, and one of the last survivors of that splendid chivalry which had suffered so terribly from the English longbows at Azincourt, added some remarks characteristic of the soldier rather than of the diplomatist. "Monseigneur," he said, addressing the Duke of Burgundy, "you are well known to be a wise prince. You have heard these demands, and need no counsel from others in what manner you ought to reply. Therefore it were well to give us our answer at once." "Ha, fair brother!" exclaimed Philip, "are you but just come, and in such haste to depart? To ask and to obtain are

two things not often concluded in an hour. Yet I have good hopes that I shall be able to make such a response as shall well content the king." "Monseigneur," replied the count sharply, "you will answer according to you own pleasure; but, if I might advise you, you will send back the Bastard of Rubempré, and not incur the peril that must otherwise ensue." "Fair brother," said the duke, rising from his seat, as a signal that the audience was to terminate, "I have often before heard high and threatening talk, and do not remember that it moved me much. To-morrow this matter shall be settled. In the mean time I bid you welcome." [44]

The night was spent by Charles, who considered himself as put upon his trial at the suit of the king, in the preparation of his defence. He felt the importance, at this critical moment, of avoiding that style of expression into which he would have been led by his natural impetuosity if unrestrained, and which could do him no good service with the duke. He therefore committed his speech to writing, carefully weighing the language, and modifying such phrases as were too strongly seasoned with invective. In the morning he passed from his lodgings to the palace, dressed in his richest attire, and surrounded by a troop of nobles, who welcomed this opportunity of ranging themselves openly as his partisans. Philip, however, on the plea of other business, adjourned the audience to the following Friday. In the interval the whole town was in a state of excitement—the insulting language of the envoys being commented upon in a spirit of loyal indignation by the inhabitants of every class.

[44] Chastellain, pp. 347-349.—Duclercq, tom. iv. pp. 71-73.—Commines, tom. i. pp. 7-9.—Procès Verbal des Ambassadeurs, Lenglet, tom. ii. p. 417, et seq.

On the appointed day the duke took his place in the hall of audience on a raised seat, having around him the knights of the Golden Fleece and the great officers of his household. The apartment was thronged by persons of noble condition. In such an assembly Philip was well qualified to preside, distinguished as he was by the natural dignity of his sentiments, by his commanding appearance, and by the ease with which long habit invested his assumptions of authority. After the usual formalities the Count of Charolais, placing his knee on a velvet stool in front of the dais, entered upon the delivery of an address characterized by his wonted earnestness, but also, in the report of Chastellain at least, by something of the quaintness and prolixity of that venerable chronicler himself. Substantially, however, this version agrees with other and more concise reports, and, among them, with that of Commines, then a youth of nineteen, who, three days before the arrival of the French embassy, had been received as a page in the household of the heir of Burgundy, and who commences with an account of these events what is perhaps the most remarkable narrative given of contemporaneous affairs by any modern writer.

The topic most enlarged upon by Charles was the complaint which had been made of his alliance with the Duke of Brittany. It was true, he said, that, in accordance with the customs of chivalry, they had formed a bond of friendship with each other, and called themselves brothers in arms. But he denied that there was anything in this connection prejudicial to the authority of the crown. "Methinks," he remarked, "it should please the king right well to see the princes of his blood and the supporters of his throne bound together in amity

and concord. His predecessors had good cause to lament the dissensions and feuds that existed among their vassals. He alone has been so fortunate as to see them all united and at peace; and accursed be the attempt, by whomsoever made, to sow division and hostility among them!"

He treated with disdain the intimation that his sentiments towards the king had been affected by the loss of his pension. "I never solicited him," he said, for "either pensions or honours. What he gave was given of his own accord; it was his to grant, and his to withhold. While I enjoy your favour, my redoubted lord and father, I have no need to seek the benefactions of any other prince."

He concluded his oration by enumerating the vexatious acts which Louis, since his accession, had committed against the house of Burgundy, dwelling with particular emphasis on the countenance he had given to its hereditary enemies, the people of Liége. "It was easy to see," remarks Commines, "that he would have spoken far more sharply had he not been restrained by his father's presence."

The duke could not but listen with pleasure to a defence so forcible and yet so temperate. His own reply to the ambassadors was in a lighter tone, which, if it gave no additional weight to his reasonings, detracted nothing from the seriousness of his intentions. They had charged his son with being of a suspicious nature. "If this be so," he said, "he does not derive it from me; for I have never been troubled with fears of any prince or of any living man. It must be," he added, with a smile, "that he has inherited this quality from his mother, who, as I have often found occasion to lament, is the most suspicious person in the world."

He refused, as was doubtless anticipated, to set the Bastard of Rubempré at liberty. The arrest had been made in Holland, which was not a fief of France, and for his government of which he did not hold himself accountable to the king. As to delivering up the friars whose discourses had given notoriety to the affair, Philip observed that, for his part, he was only a temporal prince, and did not pretend to exercise authority in matters of ecclesiastical discipline. It was certain that there were many preachers who had very little understanding, and who were in the habit of speaking indiscreetly; and it was, moreover, notorious that these friars wandered from place to place, and, when they were gone, no one knew what had become of them, or remembered what they had preached. He gave the same denial to the demand for the surrender of Olivier de Lamarche, in whose case, if he should be found to have done anything amiss, justice should be administered without partiality. When he came to touch upon the accusation made against himself—that he had broken his plighted word to the king—Philip's manner changed. He hesitated for a moment; then, looking round upon the assembly and raising his voice, "Let every one be assured," he said, "that I never failed of my promise to living man when it was possible for me to perform it;" and, resuming his former tone, he added, "I never broke troth in my life, unless it were with a lady." He gave his reasons—"certain great affairs which demanded his attention"—for having quitted Hesdin so abruptly, and ended by begging the envoys to make his excuses on this point to his sovereign.[45]

After wine and spices had been served, the ambas-

[45] Chastellain, p. 351, et seq.—Commines, tom. i. pp. 10, 11.—Duclercq, tom. iv. pp. 77-80.—Basin. tom. ii. pp. 92, 93.

sadors took leave of Philip and the count. Charles, who stood at some distance from his father, spoke privately to the Archbishop of Narbonne. "Commend me," he said, "to the king's grace; he has caused his chancellor here to berate me soundly; but tell him before a year has passed he will have seen reasons for repenting of it." [46] The message was not forgotten by the person intrusted with it, or—as we shall hereafter see—by the person to whom it was sent.

It was, indeed, no idle menace. Although the alliance between the Duke of Brittany and the Count of Charolais did not include the English monarch, it was not long confined to the original parties. Its ramifications extended throughout France. A conspiracy was formed embracing most of the princes and nobles of the realm, and known to more than five hundred persons including many ladies; yet no whisper of it, we are told, reached the ear of the jealous king. In his own capital, in the great cathedral of Notre Dame, the agents of the confederates met, towards the close of the year 1464, and recognizing one another by a silken *aiguillette* which each wore at his girdle, conferred together and arranged a plan of operations.[47]

The head-quarters of these intrigues were in Brittany. The duke himself was a person of slender abilities, and in no respect qualified to be the leader of a great enterprise; but his court was the abode of many accomplished politicians, some of them old servants of Charles the Seventh, whom Louis, in the heedless vengeance which marked the commencement of his reign, had dis-

[46] "Recommandez moy tres humblement à la bonne grace du Roy, et luy dictes qu'il m'a bien faict laver icy par son chancellier, mais que avant qu'il soit ung an il s'en repentira." Commines, tom. i. p. 12.

[47] Lamarche, tom. ii. pp. 234, 235.

missed from their employments. Early in the spring of 1465, an envoy from Brittany, Odet d'Aydie, Sire de Lescun, arrived at the court of France for the ostensible purpose of arranging amicably some questions in dispute between his master and the king. He found the latter at Poitiers, on his way to visit the shrine of Our Lady of Puy, in Anjou. Having received his answer, Odet, instead of returning at once to Brittany, waited at a place four leagues distant from Poitiers until the real object of his mission should have been secured.

It was important that a league formed against the government by the princes of the realm, under the usual pretext of rectifying abuses introduced by the ill-disposed advisers of the sovereign, should have at its head the person nearest in blood and interest to the throne. It was not likely that Louis, who had himself yielded so readily to the seductions employed on such occasions, should fail to exercise a strict surveillance over his brother, the heir presumptive to the crown. The young Duke of Berri led, in fact, the life of a prisoner. He was compelled to attend the restless king in his incessant journeys, and was hardly suffered to be absent from his sight.[48] Yet, on the present occasion, Louis, on resuming his pilgrimage, left his brother at Poitiers. Half an hour after his departure the Duke of Berri, pretending a design to hunt, passed the barriers of the castle with a few attendants, and hastened to the spot which he had secretly agreed upon with Odet as a place of meeting. Preparations had been made for his flight, and he was speedily beyond the reach of pursuit.[49]

[48] Basin, tom. ii. p. 100.

[49] Letter of the King to the Duke of Bourbon, Duclos, tom. iii. preuves, p. 225.—Duclercq, tom. iv. p. 109.—Basin, tom. ii. p. 100.

All that was now thought wanting to insure the success of the movement was the adhesion of the Duke of Burgundy. His friend and kinsman, the Duke of Bourbon, one of the principal confederates, visited him at Lille, and endeavoured to obtain his concurrence. Letters were sent to him from Brittany, signed by the Duke of Berri, in which he was conjured to unite with the other members of the royal family in settling the affairs of the kingdom. But Philip still shrank from the thought of disturbing that peace which thirty years before he had himself bestowed upon France, and of renewing in his old age the civil wars to which an irresistible appeal had forced him to become a party in his youth. It was his highest glory that to him the realm was indebted for its present tranquillity. That tranquillity he had made the strongest efforts and the greatest sacrifices to preserve. At the very moment of his dismissing the envoys of Louis with an unsatisfactory reply, we find him, in conversation with an English agent, expressing his earnest desire to aid in negotiating such a treaty between the two countries as might conduce to the interests of both.[50] His son, in a private interview with him, poured forth in passionate strains his complaints against the Croys. The duke heard him without anger, but answered pathetically, "Charles, I am old and feeble. I have always endeavoured to avoid dissensions in my family; suffer me still to live in peace. Be content with the place which you hold in my affections. These men are strangers to me; you are my son, my legitimate heir, my flesh and my blood."

An attempt was made to mediate between the

[50] See the Letter of Sir Robert Nevil, November 17, 1464, Commines, tom. iii. preuves, p. 212.

hostile parties. Some of the courtiers represented to Antony de Croy the perilous situation in which he stood, and would fain have persuaded him to accept an offer of grace conditional on his resigning the offices bestowed upon him by Louis, and lending all his influence with Philip to the support of the confederates. The aged minister listened to their arguments in a manner that seemed to betoken irresolution. But he had gone too far to recede with safety. He felt that by such a course he should place himself powerless in the hands of his enemies. When warmly pressed, he answered with a blunt refusal. "I will not," he said, "exchange the service of a king of France for that of a Count of Charolais. Pardon me, and adieu!"[51] He retired to Tournay, then a French town, though geographically a part of Hainault. His nephew, the Lord of Quiévrain, who had for some time performed his duties as first chamberlain, continued to represent him at Philip's court.

At this critical moment the duke was again attacked by paralysis. His son assumed the reins of government; and his first act was to wrest from the Croys the government of Luxembourg and other provinces. When Philip had partially recovered, he was induced to confirm what had been done. Quiévrain, however, held his ground. On the following day the confirmation was revoked. The Count of Charolais was refused admittance to his father's presence. But he gathered his adherents round him, and declared his resolution not to quit the palace.[52] He issued a manifesto, calling upon

[51] "Respondit tout court et comme approcié du point où il convenoit taire ou faire. . . . Je ne veulx pas cessier le service d'ung roi de France pour ung comte de Charolais. Pardonnez moi et adieu." Chastellain, p. 376.

[52] "Avons supplié et requis, en toute humilité, à mondit seigneur et pere, que son plaisir feust nous donner audience de parler à lui. . . . Et pour

the towns to support him in his just pretensions and in the preservation of his birthright; denouncing the Croys as traitors, and citing, as evidence of their secret machinations for the overthrow of the house of Burgundy, their long hostility to himself, their league with Nevers and with the king, and their abuse of Philip's confidence as shown in their monopoly of his favours, in various acts of maladministration, but especially in the false and treasonable representations by which they had induced the sovereign to weaken his power and imperil his dominions by giving up the places in Picardy. The effect of this appeal was to produce a ferment throughout the Netherlands. The unpopular ministers saw the necessity of retiring from the unequal contest. They were permitted to carry with them into France a portion of their personal effects; but their immense landed possessions were seized upon and confiscated.

Before his departure Quiévrain went to take leave of the duke. The announcement that his servants had been discharged without his knowledge or consent, that their lives had been threatened and their property seized, roused a spark of the ancient fire in Philip's breast. He snatched up a weapon, and, tottering from the chamber, vowed to take vengeance on his son. But the time had passed when the gleams of his wrath excited terror where they fell. The ladies of the court surrounded him, soothed him with persuasive words, and disarmed his impotent fury. Charles did not yet ven-

ce que n'avons encore peu parvenir à ladite audience avoir, nous avons depuis fait assembler devers nous ceulx de son sang, avec tous les chevaliers, escuyers et gens de conseil notables de son hostel et du nostre.... Nostre intention est de continuelment nous tenir doresenavant empres lui et en son hostel," &c. Letter of the Count of Charolais, March 12, 1465, in Gachard, Doc. Inéd. tom. i. pp. 139, 140.

ture to appear before him; but a plan for effecting a reconciliation was skilfully arranged. "On the thirteenth day of April, being Holy Friday, the day on which Our Lord Jesus Christ suffered death upon the cross, a very solemn preacher delivered a discourse, in the house of the Duke of Burgundy, in Brussels, upon clemency and mercy, which was very pitiable to hear; and on the day following, being Easter Eve, the Count of Charolais, attended by the knights of the Golden Fleece and many other great lords, came before his father, and, throwing himself upon his knees, said, 'I beseech you, my redoubted lord and father, in honour of the passion of Our Saviour, to pardon what I have done amiss; for what I have done was in defence of my own life, and for the preservation of yourself and of your subjects.'" He then proceeded, "in discreet and noble language," to explain at length the motives from which he had acted—his father "holding him all the while by the arm, and looking him steadfastly in the eyes." When he had finished Philip raised him, and "kissed him upon the mouth." "Charles, my son," he said, "I pardon all the offences you have ever committed against me to the present hour; be my good son, and I will be your good father." As he spoke Philip shed tears, and "most part of those who were there wept also;" while the chroniclers hastened to record, in their euphuistic phraseology, "how the good duke had pardoned the maladroitness of his son." [53]

The plans of the confederates were now ripe. Active

[53] "Comment le duc de Bourgogne pardonna à son fils son mal talent." See the description of this scene in Duclercq (tom. iv. p. 137, et seq.), and in a letter of the time printed among the Doc. Inéd. sur l'Hist. de France, Mélanges, tom. ii. p. 227.

preparations were made for war. The time and the place of meeting were appointed. The Count of Charolais proclaimed himself lieutenant-general of his father, and called upon the estates of Flanders and of Hainault to grant him a subsidy. But he did not wait for the deliberative action with which those bodies were accustomed to answer such demands. He sent forth an invitation to all the vassals of the house of Burgundy to assemble with their retainers. His powerful friend, the Count of Saint-Pol, aided him in raising and equipping the necessary force. His numerous allies displayed similar activity; and through the length and breadth of France the trumpet blast rang out which summoned the chivalry to arms.

CHAPTER V.

WAR OF THE PUBLIC WEAL. — BATTLE OF MONTLHÉRY.

1465.

CIVIL war in France—a violent collision between the crown and its great vassals—was a matter not of choice or of chance, but of necessity. Two hostile powers, two irreconcilable principles, had long aspired to prevail; and the time had arrived when a trial of strength must be made—when each must exhibit, in open and strenuous conflict with the other, the extent of its means, the stability of its position, its internal force and vitality.

Such conflicts may be long postponed; and the longer they are postponed the better for the nation, and for the cause which depends for its ultimate triumph on the reality and justness of its claims. It is the part of Prudence to wrestle with Fate—to mediate for mutual concessions, to frame compromises, to readjust a drooping balance, and appeal to the slow arbitrament of Time. But, in point of fact, the question is always tried, if not always solved, by readier and swifter methods. Those who are confident in their right and in their might may be content to wait; but they who are weak in resources or in faith put their trust in Opportunity, seek to conquer by surprise or by sudden onslaughts, and are ever the first to unsheathe the sword and make Fortune the umpire of their quarrel.

In which of these two classes Louis the Eleventh

should be placed might not, perhaps, be easy to determine. His character, even after due elimination of the moral elements, does not readily yield a pure residuum to the ordinary tests. He was at once confident and apprehensive, wary and rash, ready by any aggressions to provoke hostilities, ready by any sacrifices to avert or to terminate them. Yet these seeming inconsistencies cannot be attributed to a lack of clear perceptions, to instability of purpose, or to incapacity of endurance. It may rather appear that his quick and fertile intellect, anticipating remote contingencies, suggesting diverse expedients, and prompting continual experiments, will account at once for the rapidity of his movements and the tortuousness of his course, for his temerity and his fears, for his haste and his hesitancy, for his grasping acquisitiveness and his unrepining submission when compelled to make restitution, for the indiscretions which involved him in war, and the anxieties which led him, when at war, to seek only for the means of obtaining peace.[1]

Ever since his accession he had been indefatigable in conciliating the good will of foreign powers, especially of those powers with which his father's relations had been unfriendly or precarious. He had striven hard for a peaceful and final settlement with England, and, notwithstanding the late ominous change of dynasty in that country, and the counter influences at work, had at least succeeded in getting the truce extended. He had hastened to close a long existing breach between the French government and the pope, by rescinding the

[1] "Quant il avoit la guerre, il desiroit paix ou trefve: quand il l'avoit, à grant peine la povoit il endurer. . . . Sa complexion estoit telle, et ainsi vivoit." Commines, tom. ii. p. 273.

Pragmatic Sanction established by Charles the Seventh as a security for his own independence and the liberties of the Gallican Church. He had stepped forward, as the friend of both parties, to mediate between the sovereigns of Castile and Aragon—not, however, without deriving some profit from their embroilment. He had, in like manner, tendered his mediation in the affairs of Savoy, with the advantageous results already noticed. He had formed a strict and cordial alliance with Francis Sforza, Duke of Milan—a congenial spirit, the most despotic and the most politic of the Italian princes; and he was on terms of almost equal amity with the Venetian oligarchy, more despotic and more politic than any prince. But there was one power with which Louis had concluded no treaty, whose friendship he had not courted, whose enmity he had seemed to disregard. And this power was France. Not France as a unit, as a nation or a people,—for in this sense its existence was theoretical rather than real,—but France as it actually existed, divided into many bodies, represented by many heads; the France that was not French, but Gascon, Breton, Burgundian, nay English and anti-French when occasion suited.

How was it possible that this France should regard the king otherwise than as a foe? What need of any king where there were so many princes, each competent to govern his own dominions, each paramount in fact, if not in name, with his own vassals?[2] Or, if there were some mysterious attributes of royalty not possible to be dispensed with, these could all be exercised by a crowned

[2] The real aim of the feudal princes, in this reign, to subvert the monarchy, is plainly intimated in the sarcastic remark of Charles the Bold, that he loved France so well as to wish to give it six kings in place of one.

puppet, made to move and speak at the dictation of the real sovereigns. As for the present king, not content with usurping the reality of power, he made a scoff of those emblematical functions which shadowed forth the divinity of the regal character. Instead of surrounding himself with the magnates of his realm, and acting by their counsel and through their agency, he shunned their society, dispensed with all external splendour, courted obscurity, chose his companions and ministers among the low-born, and watched the proceedings of his vassals with the prying eyes of a spy or with the mocking air of a *railleur*. Grievous as had been his encroachments, it was by his innovations—by his deviations from established usage, and his visible want of reverence for the forms, the customs, the distinctions of rank, which gave to the whole fabric of society its harmony and "order"—that he had brought this storm upon his head.

Accordingly, in their manifestoes, the confederates, haughtily repelling the charge that their enterprise was unlawful, that they were stirring up a "rebellion," declared it to be the bounden duty and solemn obligation of the great feudatories and princes of the blood to see that the realm was properly governed, and to correct whatever was amiss. They called upon "all virtuous men" to assist them in this laudable undertaking.[3] It was no private cause for which they were prepared to

[3] "Pour ce que à mectre et donner ordre à l'estat, police et gouvernement dudit royaulme, les princes et seigneurs du sang, comme membres principaulx de la couronne et par le conseil desquelz et non d'autres se doivent traictier, conduire et consulter les grands et principaulx affaires du roy et dudit royaulme, peuvent et sont tenuz eulx emploier et exposer leurs personnes et leurs biens; et en ce tous hommes vertueux les peuent et doivent servir, aydier et conforter, selon bonne coustume et raison, sans repréhencion quelconque." Lettre du Comte de Charolais aux habitants d'Amiens, Doc. Inéd. sur l'Hist. de France, Mélanges, tom. ii., p. 317.

"imperil life and land," but that of the "Public Weal." "Order" was to be re-established; the unworthy persons who had crept into office, poisoning the fountain of honour and vitiating the healthful action of its streams, were to be removed and punished; the taxes were to be abolished,[4] and "the poor, oppressed people" set free from its intolerable burdens.[5] Moreover, there was a private understanding, or contemplated arrangement, among the leaders of the revolution, that a regency should be created, as a means of keeping under restraint the eccentric propensities of the sovereign, and that the post of constable of France, left vacant since the death of the Count of Richemont, who in the earlier days of Charles the Seventh had long held that monarch in leading strings, should be suitably filled.[6]

Supposing Louis to possess the patience and meekness of his beatified ancestor Saint Louis, these virtues must be sorely tried if such a scheme went into operation. Yet there seemed to be little chance of his eluding the net prepared for him. The summons of the princes was joyfully responded to by the whole of the lesser nobility, a class corresponding in rank with the country gentlemen of England. This class had a real grievance to allege—greater than was endured by any other in the kingdom, the greatest that human beings are ever called upon to endure. They were suffering from *ennui*,

[4] "Sachés le bon vouloir et la sainte intencion que mondit seigneur de Berry a au bien du royaume et à abatre toutes gabelles, imposicions, mangeries et autres charges indeues du pouvre peuple." Lettre de Guillaume Hugonet aux ceux d'Amiens, Ibid., p. 307.

[5] See the manifesto of the Duke of Berri, that of the Count of Charolais, and other documents of the like nature, in Lenglet, tom. ii., p. 438, et al., and Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii., p. 297, et seq.

[6] Interrogatoire du Seigneur de Crèvecœur, Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. i., p. 352.

the consequence of the king's prohibition of the chase. Their occupation was gone; and they had long sat in enforced idleness, looking with half-vacant, half-wistful gaze on the road that led to Paris—the residence of the king and of the court, where, in a natural state of things, they might revolve as satellites around the great central luminary, whose beams were now obscured or shed only on clods incapable of reflecting its light. In no other capital in the world were there so many honourable and lucrative offices in the gift of the crown. For one of these a man might be content to exchange the isolated grandeur, the solitary and now silent life of the *château*. Should the duties prove irksome, or demand acquirements more extensive than befitted a person of high descent, they could be performed by deputy, or the place might be disposed of for a sum sufficient to yield an annuity hardly inferior in amount to the salary.[1] Besides offices, there was, or should be, an unlimited pension fund at the royal disposal. For what purpose were the *taille* and the *gabelle* levied on the villain burghers, if the nobles derived no benefit from these exactions? The noble was the king's soldier, bound to

[1] Concerning the immense number of offices and office hunters, the sale of places, and the rapid fortunes accumulated by the holders,—through the largeness not of the salaries, but of the irregular perquisites, and the common facilities for extortion,—consult Basin, tom. ii., cap. 2, 6, 7, and Commines, tom. i., p. 65. It was, perhaps, as much to avoid being pestered with solicitations as from a perception of the greater evils attendant on a system of frequent removals, that Louis XI. laid down a rule, though without always abiding by it, that all offices not strictly political should be held not at the pleasure of the crown, but "on good behaviour." To the neglect of this fundamental principle of a well organized state, more than to any other *predisposing* cause, may be ascribed the difficulties and perils which the great American republic—so fortunate in its exemption from all external sources of embarrassment—has had to encounter. "Je parle de ces offices et auctoritez," remarks the sagacious Commines, "*pour ce qu'ilz font desirer mutations, et aussi sont cause d'icelles.*"

obey his summons to the field and to defend him against his enemies. But, unless his pension were regularly paid, he was unable even to keep his arms and equipments in proper condition. He was loyally desirous, in the present crisis, to fight on the king's side; but the very suit of armour which he had intended to purchase for the occasion—only waiting till he should receive the arrears of his pension—had been bought in the mean while by another person,—his own brother, in fact,—who had gone off to join the Count of Charolais.[8]

Such being the situation and the feelings of the mass of the nobility, no wonder that the appeals of the confederate princes roused a universal echo, and that a joyous bustle now filled every courtyard and moated tower from the rock-bound coast of Brittany to the sunny plains of Provence. The war-steed — or, in default of an animal deserving of that name, the hackney or the plough-horse—was harnessed for battle.[9] The steel casque and cuirass were taken down from the walls where they had rusted since the expulsion of the English. A new generation was to wear them. Yet some of the survivors of the English wars, some of the veteran chiefs of the *Écorcheurs*, displayed as much alacrity and mettle as those to whom their exploits had first become familiar in the tales and ballads of the nursery. Old Dunois, the famous Bastard of Orleans,

[8] See the letter — highly characteristic of the sentiments and conduct of the class to which the writer belonged — containing the excuses of Jean d'Arly, a nobleman of Picardy, for not joining the royal standard when called upon. Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii. p. 290.

[9] The sudden rise in the price of horses, and the difficulty, amounting almost to impossibility, of procuring any fit for the field, are noticed in letters of the time as well as by the chroniclers. See, for example, a letter in the Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii. pp. 241, 242.

who had fought by the side of Joan of Arc, forgot his gout, as likewise a mission which he had undertaken at the king's request, and went off to join Lohéac, Sancerre, and others of his former companions-in-arms, in Brittany. A murmur of the distant war-cry reached the chamber in the Bastille where the Count of Dammartin was expiating his imprudence in having decided to remain in France and claim an impartial verdict from the royal "justice"—"grace" being, in his case, something not to be hoped for. Stimulated by the cheering sound, he contrived to cut a hole in the thick wall of the tower in which he was confined, and, escaping into Brittany, received there the welcome due to the ablest and most experienced soldier of the time.[10]

There could be no better proof of the general and instinctive perception that the real question at issue was the existence of feudalism as a rival power to monarchical authority, than the abandonment of the royal cause by all who had any interest in the maintenance of feudal independence. It was not merely by those whom he had injured, or by those whom he had slighted, that Louis found himself attacked. He was deserted or betrayed by such as he had favoured and caressed. In his hostile policy towards his great vassals he had made an exception in favour of the Armagnacs, the ancient enemies of the house of Burgundy. The head of this family, Count John, whose infamous life was the scandal of Christendom,[11] had not only obtained

[10] "Trouva et feit un troue en ung des murs de la tour," says Duclercq (tom. iv., p. 111), who adds other particulars of his escape. His previous vicissitudes, sudden appearance before the king at Bordeaux, and demand for "justice," are recounted in the Cabinet de Louis XI., in the Chronique sur Dammartin, and in documents printed by Godefroy and by Lenglet.

[11] Among other instances of his

a remission of the sentence of banishment and confiscation pronounced against him in the last reign, but had received such tokens of the royal regard as formed a contrast to the treatment experienced by persons of a different character. His brother, too, had been created Duke of Nemours, and stood so high in the confidence of Louis that he was even designated as "the favourite."[12] Was it possible that these men had secretly joined the alliance against the king? Hearing a rumour to that effect, he sent them a summons to join him, with their levies, in the Bourbonnais, where the standard of revolt was first unfurled. They obeyed the call, and, on their arrival, gave their aid to the enemy.

The course pursued by the Count of Nevers was hardly less extraordinary. He was bound to a strenuous support of the king, and to a strenuous resistance to the most resolute of the king's opponents, not only by the tie of gratitude, but by the stronger tie of a common enmity. Yet, notwithstanding that no overtures were made to him by the Count of Charolais—notwithstanding that his own overtures were scornfully rejected—at the moment when he was soliciting money and supplies to enable him to put the fortresses in Picardy in a state of defence, he was endeavouring, by abject entreaties and through circuitous channels, to obtain from his implacable kinsman permission to desert to his standard.[13]

villany and brazen effrontery was his request for a papal dispensation to enable him to marry his own sister, with whom he lived in notorious concubinage.

[12] He is called the "mignon de roy Loys" in the letter of Sir Robert Neville's previously cited. The king's early partiality for the Armagnacs had its origin in the obscure divisions and intrigues of his father's court.

[13] Nevers could plead, however, by way of excuse, the general disaffection of the nobles of Picardy and the Nivernais, and the flight even of the members of his household—unless, indeed, these were partly consequences of his own lack of loyalty and good faith.

The house of Anjou, the eldest collateral branch of the royal family, was in precisely the same situation as the house of Burgundy. Good King René had as little relish for civil war as the good Duke Philip. But he, too, had an only son whose temper was ardent and stern, and who was personally hostile to the French monarch. John of Calabria, as he was called from his claim to the Neapolitan duchy of that name, had the restless and dauntless spirit that distinguished his sister Margaret, the exiled Queen of England. His life, like that of Margaret, was wasted in stormy but fruitless efforts for the recovery of a lost kingdom. He had applied to Louis to assist him in an attempt to get possession of the inheritance bequeathed to his father by Joanna of Naples; but, instead of receiving any aid from that quarter, he had reason to suspect that his plans had been foiled through information secretly furnished to his rival by the French court. He now eagerly embraced the opportunity for vengeance; and, being the idol of the Provençal nobility,[14] he found no difficulty in setting aside the pacific policy of René, and enrolling the vassals of his house in this general gathering of feudal France.

Thus, at the moment when the contest was about to commence, the chances of Louis were already desperate. The kingdom was in arms against the king. The provinces had risen against the capital. The supporters of the monarchy had combined to overthrow the monarchy. The royal family had determined on the extinction of

See the Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii., pp. 257, 301, et al.; Duclercq, tom. iv., pp. 142-146.

[14] "Ilz ont monseigneur de Calabre comme leur Dieu." Lettre de Pierre Gruel au Roi, Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii., p. 382.

royalty. The sovereign stood alone; alone, for of the few who remained around him not one was to be trusted; alone, for those who should have made common cause with him—the inhabitants of the towns, all seeking to emancipate themselves from the feudal yoke and to obtain a closer connection with the crown—chose to assume the attitude of passive and indifferent spectators.[15]

The towns on the Somme had an especial interest in the quarrel. They had concurred joyfully in the late transfer of their allegiance to the king, who, to strengthen their fidelity, had exempted them from the payment of the *taille*, and even reduced the imposts which had been levied upon them by the Duke of Burgundy. It was impossible that they should be deluded by the pretexts and promises of the confederates. These, as Louis reminded his people, were the shallow and stale devices employed on many former occasions for convulsing the realm and spreading calamities and horrors of which the recollection was still fresh, of which the bloody imprint had not yet been erased.[16] The nobles had proclaimed their intention to abolish the taxes. In the same breath they had complained that their pensions were unpaid. How were they to be satisfied on this latter point without augmenting the burdens they were

[15] "Sembloient bien," says Commines (tom. i., p. 21), "qu'ilz escoutassent qui seroit le plus fort ou le Roy ou les seigneurs."

[16] "Es autres divisions passées qui ont esté en ce royaume, tant du temps du roy de Navarre, des Maillez, et de ce qui fut dit et semé par avant l'an MCCCCXVIII:, ceulx qui suscitèrent et meirent sus lesdites divisions, faisoient telles faulses semances et remonstrances pour atraire le peuple à eulx, qui depuis s'en trouva déceu. Car, *ainsi que les choses sont assez notoires* et connues à plusieurs qui les ont veues à l'ueil, il s'en ensuivist la destruction de la pluspart du royaume, . . . maux infinis et innumérables, dont tout le royaume se sent encore et sentira d'uy à cent ans." Avertissement du Roy aux Villes d'Auvergne, Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii., p. 214.

so anxious to remove? No one could complain that the king had appropriated the revenues of the crown to his personal gratifications. They had been expended in providing for the ordinary necessities of the state, in maintaining forces for its protection, and in redeeming territory which had been alienated in the preceding reign. What remained had been distributed among the nobles. The king himself had lived like a pauper, while, as he proudly averred, he had toiled more diligently for the benefit of his people than any monarch of France since Charlemagne.[17]

What prevented his appeals from producing their due effect with the towns on the Somme was the dilapidated state of the fortifications, the want of garrisons sufficient even to head the resistance, above all the temporising and disloyal conduct of the king's lieutenant. The confederates, on their part, cautiously abstained from every act that might have provoked the people to take up arms. Plunder was not permitted to the troops; the traveller was unmolested; the merchant's bales were as safe on the high road as in time of peace; supplies were paid for with a scrupulous exactness hitherto unknown in war. Thus, while a struggle involving the very existence of the French nation was going on in the heart of the kingdom, the towns were enabled to maintain a strict neutrality, and to shut out the destructive element which had smitten them so terribly in former struggles of the like nature. The thunder-cloud passed harmlessly over, to discharge its bolt upon the head of Louis. It was for him to protect himself as he could.

He had formed originally a bold though simple plan

[17] See various letters and proclamations in the Doc. Inéd., ubi supra, et al.; Duclercq, tom. iv., p. 124, et seq.; Lenglet, tom. ii., pp. 445-452.

for encountering his enemies in detail. His forces consisted chiefly of the small regular army first established by his father, and of the feudal levies of Dauphiné and Savoy. Retaining under his own command the greater portion of these troops, he had hastened southward to attack the Duke of Bourbon—who had imprudently commenced the war before his allies were on the march—hoping, as there were few fortified places in the province, to overrun it and crush the rebellion in a few weeks. In the mean time he expected the Count of Maine, a member of the house of Anjou, brother of René, to hold the Bretons in check; while Nevers, in like manner, was to obstruct the advance of the Burgundian army through Picardy until the king could go thither in person. The celerity of his movements and the vigour of his attack would have ensured the success of this plan, in spite of the coldness and secret disaffection of Nevers and Maine, had it not been for the desertion of the Armagnacs. He had struck the half-drawn sword from the weak hand of his opponent, when he found himself obliged to turn against his treacherous friends. The time thus lost rendered his designs abortive. The Count of Maine had no intention of fighting. The part he aspired to play was that of a mediator. Himself a prince of the blood, his only desire was to find a means of reconciling the unhappy differences between the members of the royal family—in other words, of disarming the king and placing him at the mercy of his enemies. He retired before the forces opposed to him; the Count of Charolais encountered as little resistance from Nevers; and thus from the west and north two armies were about to effect a junction under the walls of the capital. If they gained

an entrance, the crown of France was lost to Louis. He must fly the kingdom. Within it there would be left to him no hope of succour, no possible chance of obtaining shelter from his triumphant and rancorous foes.

He had been recently seized with an extraordinary affection for his fair city of Paris. He had declared, with truth, that all his hopes centred in the loyalty of its inhabitants. He was about to send his queen to reside with them—to be protected by them, to be carefully watched and attended in her time of need.[18] For he took this opportunity of announcing that she was pregnant. Whether her expected child would prove a son—whether the Duke of Berri would long continue to hold the position of heir-presumptive—was a matter which Louis was content to leave to the decision of Heaven—of his patrons the Blessed Virgin and Saint Francis.[19]

He was not ignorant, however, that he had many cold friends, the allies many secret adherents, in the capital. He had kept a jealous eye upon it while engaged in active operations in the centre of the kingdom; and, when informed that hostile armies were fast approaching,

[18] "Leur mandoit qu'il leur envoyeroit la Royne pour accoucher à Paris, comme à Ville du monde que plus il aimoit." De Troyes, in Lenglet, tom. ii., p. 21.

[19] "Le Roy sçait bien que mondit sieur de Berry est son seul frere, . . . et au regard d'estre heritier presomptif du Roy, le Roy ne dit oncques ne fit chose dont il eut cause de soy douloir; . . . *mais la mercy Dieu, le Roy est encore jeune et vertueux*, et la Reine est en estat de disposition de porter des enfans, et *est à present enseincte d'enfant* [a slight miscalculation, since her next child was not born till more than two years afterwards], et de ce qui surviendra en ce cas, le Roy le remet en la disposition de notredit Seigneur, et après à Notre-Dame et Saint François." Responces faites par le Roy aux Articles touchant ce qui avoit esté pourparlé entre le Roy de Sicile et Monsieur le Duc de Berry et autres, Lenglet, tom. ii., p. 449.

he patched up an armistice with the Armagnacs, leaving the account between them to be settled on a future occasion, and once more turned his face northward.

The forces under the Count of Charolais consisted of fourteen hundred men-at-arms, with their customary attendants, and eight thousand archers, besides many pieces of artillery, such as were then in common use —"bombards," "veuglaires," "serpentines," &c.—machines which made a direful noise, and were capable also of doing considerable mischief, sometimes to an enemy, more often, in the present campaign, to the inexpert artillerymen. Only a portion of the feudal levies of the Netherlands were comprised in this array. The leaders of the expedition—Charles himself, the Count of Saint-Pol, the Sire de Ravenstein, and others—had sent out invitations to the nobles, requesting them to assemble at the place of muster with their friends and dependants. There had been no lack of zeal; but there was a great deficiency of horses and of proper arms and accoutrements. Of those who responded to the summons the larger number were dismissed as too ill equipped for service.[20] Few of those who remained had had any experience of war. All, perhaps, were accustomed to the use of weapons; but they had not been trained to act in concert, or to obey the voice of their commander in actual conflict. They had been brought together and prepared for service "in an instant."[21] Loans and donatives had been obtained from wealthy burghers, in anticipation of a grant from the estates; the artillery had been taken

[20] "Quant la monstre fut faicte, il y eut plus à faire à les renvoyer que à les appeller." Commines, tom. i., p. 19.

[21] "Ceste armee estant preste, qui fut tout à ung instant." Idem, p. 20.

from the arsenal of Lille; the cities had furnished tents, and a multitude of wagons not only for the conveyance of the baggage, but to enclose the encampment and serve as a defence; and on the 15th of May, less than a month after the note of war had first been sounded, the army began its march.

Saint-Pol commanded the vanguard; Ravenstein, the battle or main corps; Antony, called the Great Bastard of Burgundy, the rearguard. The Count of Charolais accompanied Saint-Pol. In his train were the Duke of Somerset, the Earl of Buchan, and other foreigners of rank, besides several old captains, on whose judgment he could rely, but whose voices were too often drowned by those of the ignorant and clamorous multitude. Unfurling its gorgeous banners of silk and embroidered gold, on which were displayed the cross of Saint Andrew and the devices of the different chiefs, the army, amounting in the whole to fourteen thousand combatants, all on horseback, crossed the frontier of Picardy. No enemy appeared to dispute their advance. They took up their quarters in the villages and smaller towns along the route; dined and supped like peaceful travellers, paying for whatever they consumed; but maintained always a careful look-out, and were excited and alert whenever the scouts announced a distant cloud of dust, or the sentinels cried an alarm as a party of friendly nobles rode into the camp. In the neighbourhood of Péronne a body of troops were seen stationed in observation. These were a few hundred lances under Joachim de Rouault, marshal of France, accompanied by Nevers. They speedily disappeared—Nevers returning into the town, and the marshal with his men retreating in the direction of Paris. Occasionally a small party of cavaliers quitted

the line of march, and went off in quest of adventure, riding up to the walls of a town and demanding, in the formal phrase of chivalry, whether there were within any man of gentle birth who desired to break a lance for his lady's sake.[22] But it was seldom that their ardour for emprise was gratified. The towns, weakly fortified, deserted by the nobility, faintly encouraged to resistance by Nevers, and abandoned by the small force which Louis had been able to spare for their defence, judged it imprudent to treat as foes men whose demands were so moderate, and who, after a brief parley, brought up their serpentines and pointed them at the walls. The castle of Beaulieu stood a week's siege, but yielded before the assault. In this easy warfare the month of June was passed; and on the 5th of July, the appointed day, Charles arrived at Saint-Denis, two leagues north of Paris, and the place of general rendezvous.[23]

His allies, more dilatory in their movements, had not yet made their appearance. He was not even reenforced, as he had expected to be, by the lances of the two Burgundies. But these disappointments, instead of damping the enthusiasm of his followers, served only to inflame their desire for glory. Why should not Paris follow the example of other towns, and, without waiting for the summons of the Duke of Berri, open its gates to the grandson of John the Fearless, the son of Philip the

[22] "Arrivez devant la ville, prindrent un villageois et luy donnant quelque argent, l'envoyèrent dedans Noyon, ... dire que s'il y avoit quelque homme d'arme qui eut envie de rompre une lance pour sa dame, qu'il sortist, et qu'il seroit fourny." Mémoires du Sire de Haynin (Publications de la Société des Bibliophiles Belges), tom. i., p. 20.

[23] Haynin, tom. i., pp. 15-22.—Commines, tom. i., p. 21.—Duclercq, tom. iv., pp. 147-154.—Extrait d'une ancienne Chronique, Lenglet, tom. ii., p. 183.—Lettre du comte de Charolais, Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii., pp. 194-196.

Good, the representative of a line of princes not less popular in the capital of France than in their own dominions, and regarded by the mass of the citizens as the champions of popular liberty? The garrison was small, comprising merely the same troops that had fled before the army on its march. Such a force would avail nothing against the general sentiment of the inhabitants. In assured confidence as to the issue, and with valour corresponding to their hopes, the Burgundian cavaliers advanced towards the outer barrier, driving before them Rouault and a party of his men-at-arms, who had come out to reconnoitre.

However, the walls did not fall down before them; and they were fain to have recourse to their bombards and serpentines, which produced "a fine hurlyburly," and even occasioned some casualties, but without any important result.[24] Their friends within did their best to assist them by running wildly through the streets and crying out that the enemy had broken in—hoping, by this artful stroke, to cause confusion and frighten the opposite party into submission. Rouault, however, kept the gates closed, and would not even permit an answer to be given to the summons sent by the Count of Charolais, who asked merely to be admitted as the lieutenant of the Duke of Berri, and to be supplied with necessaries at fair rates of payment. At this rebuff the valiant Burgundians, by their own confession, were greatly astonished and dismayed.[25] They caracoled for five or

[24] "Lors y eut beau hurtilibus de canons, vulgaires, serpentines, coulverines, et autre traict, dont y eut aucuns de tuez et navrez." De Troyes, Lenglet, tom. ii., p. 25.

[25] "Dont plusieurs des nostres furent esbahis, car l'on pensoit que quand ceux de Paris verroient la puissance du Comte de Charrolois, . . . qu'ils ne deussent oser tenir, ains incontinent soy rendre à l'obéissance dudict Duc de Berry, et de

six hours in front of the walls, by way of provoking the men-at-arms to come out and skirmish; but the royalist cavaliers contented themselves with viewing this exhibition from the ramparts. It was the opinion of the more experienced chiefs that the place was not too strong to be carried by a sudden assault. An entrance gained, the garrison would easily be overpowered; and the people, even if unfriendly, would count for nothing in a struggle of this kind. But the risk was too great. The attempt might fail; and the citizens, alarmed for the safety of their property and lives, would be roused into decided hostility, and be ready to turn a deaf ear to the proposals of the confederates when an opportunity had arisen for negotiation. The war must be carried on in the name of the Public Weal, for the benefit of the people, against a single foe—the king. If Louis should be defeated, the capital would not fail to give admittance to the victors.[26]

Governed by these considerations, the Count of Charolais returned to Saint-Denis, and consulted with his principal officers as to the best course to pursue. The debate, however, was not confined to the council-chamber of the leader; it was carried on by the whole army, and with a fair prospect of arriving at unanimity of opinion. The cry became loud and general that it was time to return home. These gallant gentlemen considered that they had done enough. Had they not crossed two rivers, the Oise and the Marne, waved their

son lieutenant le Comte de Charrolois." Haynin, tom. i., p. 23.—"A mondit seigneur trouvé ceulx de Paris tout aultres que l'en ne cuidoit; dont il n'est pas bien content sur eulx." Lettre d'un officier du Comte de Charolais au Bailli d'Auxerre, Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii., p. 350.

[26] Commines, tom. i., pp. 22, 23.—Basin, tom. ii., pp. 116, 117.—Duclercq, tom. iv., p. 155.

defiant lances under the stronghold of the foe, taunting him to come forth and do battle, and so discharged their duty as men of honour and approved good knights? Their commander, too, had kept faith with his allies; it was for them to bear the penalty of their slackness. What he ought now to reflect upon was the situation of his own army, fifty leagues from the frontier of his father's provinces, with many fortified places in its rear —places, for the most part, which had not received garrisons, and which had given no stronger pledge of their pacific intentions than a promise of neutrality extorted from their fears or granted by their apathy. Let the Burgundian forces be defeated and compelled to retreat, and the real value of this agreement would speedily become apparent.[27] To remonstrances such as these Charles had nothing to oppose save his own stubborn resolution. "I have crossed the Oise and the Marne," he said; "and I will cross the Seine, though I should have but a single page for my escort."[28]

In fact the army was not in so forlorn or desperate a position as it imagined. Paris, it is true, was not yet ready to surrender. The impatience of the Count of Charolais would not have suffered him, even had it been politic, to remain longer at Saint-Denis. But the original combinations were far from having failed. The junction of the confederates could as well be effected at some point south of the capital as on the north. In that direction, indeed — since Paris had given the Burgundians a reception so different from

[27] Haynin, tom. i., p. 25.—Commines, tom. i., p. 23.

[28] "Conclud et dict à ses gens qu'il passeroit la rivière de Seyne, et que s'ils ne le vouloient suivre, il ne le laisseroit pour eulx, voires deust-il passer avec ung seul page." Haynin, tom. i., p. 26.

what had been anticipated—lay the real field of their operations. The king was now returning, by forced marches, from the Bourbonnais. On his right the Marshal of Burgundy and the Duke of Calabria, on his left the Dukes of Brittany and Berri, were marching from opposite quarters to the same common destination. The Duke of Bourbon and the Armagnacs might be expected to hang upon his rear. To get between him and the capital—to cut him off from his only place of refuge, his only chance of succour; to drive him back upon the foes gathering on every side, or to complete his discomfiture without their assistance,—was the clear duty, as well as the ardent desire, of the Burgundian chief.[29]

Having crossed the Seine at Saint-Cloud, where he posted a strong detachment to secure the transmission of a supply of money which he expected from the Netherlands, and of which he stood in urgent need, Charles marched towards the south, leaving Paris at first on his left flank, and afterwards in his rear, and on the 15th of July arrived at Longjumeau. The Bretons, with whom he was now in communication, were approaching from the west, and he was entreated to change his course for the purpose of meeting them. But he had positive information that Louis was rapidly advancing; and he determined, therefore, to take up a position commanding the approaches to the capital, and to give battle, if necessary or feasible, without waiting for his allies. On the same evening the scouts got

[29] Lettre du Maréchal de Gamaches au Chancellier; Lettre du Comte de Charolais au Duc de Bourgogne; Mandement du Comte de Charolais aux gens de sa maison; Lettre d'un officier du Comte de Charolais au Bailli d'Auxerre, Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii., pp. 346-351.—Commines, tom. i., pp. 23-26.

sight of a small troop of horsemen beyond Montlhéry, a village three miles south of Longjumeau, and already occupied by the Burgundian vanguard under the Count of Saint-Pol. That chief had quartered his troops in the village, notwithstanding that the neighbouring eminence, from which it derived its name, was crowned by a castle in possession of a royal garrison—having entered into an agreement with the commandant that no hostilities should be offered on either side. Hearing, however, of the enemy's approach, of which he gave immediate notice to Charles, Saint-Pol withdrew at midnight to the open ground on the north, on the left hand of the road from Paris, having a forest half a league off in his rear, Montlhéry being at about the same distance in front.[30]

The night was short and sultry. Many of the Burgundian cavaliers, too excited for slumber, spent the few remaining hours of darkness in pacing to and fro; while others, still more eager and alert, kept their saddles, ready to charge whenever the signal should be given.[31] With the first gleams of light all were in motion. The Count of Charolais arrived at seven o'clock with the main body of the army, and took post on the right of the road, thus prolonging the line which had been already formed. The wagons, as usual, were ranged in front; and immediately behind this entrenchment were stationed the archers on foot, who were also provided with short stakes, after the manner of the English, to enable them, in case of need, to raise a temporary defence against the onset of cavalry. The men-at-arms remained in the rear; but a great number of

[30] Haynin, tom. i., pp. 27, 28.—Commines, tom. i., p. 27.—Duclercq, tom. iv., pp. 160, 161.

[31] Haynin, tom. i., p. 28.

cavaliers dismounted and mingled in the ranks of the archers, both as the more dangerous and honourable post, and with the purpose of inciting the courage of the men by their presence and example.

The royal army was now seen filing from the wooded heights on the south, and forming in line behind a hedge, very high and thick, which traversed the slopes of the hill. A body of troops was also pushed forward to occupy the village, but the Count of Charolais sent out a party to dislodge them, and after a sharp skirmish, the Burgundians having succeeded in setting fire to several of the houses, the flames, which were driven towards the enemy, compelled him to retreat. No attempt was made to follow up this advantage. Each army had chosen a position where it could remain on the defensive, and each waited for the other to open the attack. A few serpentines were discharged from time to time, but without any great damage to either party.

Clearly it behoved Louis to commence the battle. A long delay must be fatal to him; for the Burgundians might soon expect to be reinforced by their allies, if, indeed, these latter, advancing from different quarters, did not fall upon his flanks and rear. The object of his march was to throw himself into the capital, and fix its wavering allegiance: he had failed to accomplish this design before the arrival of the Burgundians; and it only remained, therefore, that he should fight his way through. Yet his situation was an embarrassing one. His march had been so rapid that most of his archers and other infantry were still far behind. His men-at-arms, though better trained and better equipped than those of the enemy, were inferior in numbers; and,

what was far worse, with the exception of those under his immediate command, he could place no reliance on their fidelity, or at least on that of their leaders. The Count of Maine, indeed, no sooner received the king's orders to prepare for battle than he declared that he was not there for the purpose of fighting against his cousin of Charolais and the other members of his family, but in the hope of restoring peace and amity between them and the king. Since the latter had rejected his counsel and was determined to give battle, the count must now bid him adieu. With this remark he quitted the field, carrying with him the lances under his command.[32]

Louis had still less right to count upon the loyalty of Brezé, the seneschal of Normandy, who led the vanguard of the royal army. Although he had restored this old and distinguished servant of the crown to the possession of his hereditary dignities, he bore him little love, and had treated him with an habitual lack of confidence. Yet, with an instinctive perception of his honesty of character, he now besought him to say frankly whether he had not pledged his faith to the confederates. "Ay, truly," replied the seneschal, with his accustomed irony, "they have my seal; but you have my body, and to-day at least it shall remain with you"[33]—a promise only partially fulfilled, for after the action the lifeless body remained with the enemy.

[32] "Il luy dit, 'Monseigneur, j'étois venu avec vous pour vous servir et accompagner et moyonner quelque bon accord entre vous et vostre beau cousin de Charolais et autres princes de nostre sang, et non point pour les vouloir combattre, et puis qu'il vous plaist faire ainsi, et non autrement, je m'en vois, adieu vous dis.' Et ainsi se partit avec toute sa compagnie." Haynin, tom. i., p. 33.

[33] "Sire, il est vray qu'ils ont mon sieł par de là, mais aujoud'hui vous aurez et le cœur et le corp." Idem, tom. i., p. 39.—"Luy demanda et luy prioit moult fort qu'il luy dist se il

Several hours had now passed without any further hostilities than an occasional and almost harmless exchange of cannon shots. It was high noon; the weather, in the expressive phrase of one who suffered from it, was frightfully hot;[34] and the Burgundian troops had scarcely a tree to protect them from the sweltering rays of the sun. They had been under arms since dawn, and most of them had not broken their fast since the preceding day. It was not to be expected that men who had but little acquaintance with the first duties of the soldier should display that equanimity under a galling inaction which is the crowning virtue of the veteran. Their murmurs became loud; and Charles, riding through the ranks, followed by a squire carrying his silken banner of party black and violet half unfurled, strove to reanimate their drooping spirit. His own impatience, however, was probably as great as theirs; and, leaving Ravenstein with a small force to guard the encampment, he ordered Saint-Pol to lead, and the other divisions to support, the attack.

The space between the two armies was a vast open field, waving with heavy crops of wheat and rye. The passage was toilsome; and the archers, who led the van, already jaded by hunger, thirst, and long exposure to the heat,[35] staggered forward in loose array. They had been directed to halt twice during the march; but this was not permitted by the impatient horsemen pressing

avoit baillé son sellé aux princes. . . . A quoy ledict grant seneschal respondit que ouy; mais qu'il leur demourroit, et que le corps seroit sien: et le dict en gaudissant, car ainsi estoit il accoustumé de parler." Commines, tom. i. p. 30.

[34] "Le susdit jour seiziéme, il faisoit hideusement chaud." Haynin, tom. i. p. 32.

[35] "Nos gens estants en cette longue attente se débilitoient de faim, de soif, et de soleil." Idem, tom. i. p. 33.

on the rear. Soon a cry arose that the enemy had begun to fly. In fact, the advanced line of the French had turned and galloped back to rejoin the main corps. Then all notions of order and discipline were at an end. Each man thought only of being first in the pursuit. The dismounted cavaliers hastened to regain their saddles; and the whole body of the men-at-arms, putting spurs to their horses, burst through the line of infantry, trampling down and scattering the helpless mass, and advanced, not with the steady front of martial valour, but with the tumult of a mob, towards the ascent.[36]

The royalists, having filed through the openings in the hedge, descended to meet the attack. Having but few archers, they were unable to receive their assailants with the usual discharge of arrows. It was, therefore, an equal match; and, with their bristling spears in rest, the hostile forces rushed together amid a blinding cloud of dust. The clang of steel along the front proclaimed the vigour of the shock. But, as the combat thickened, both armies were broken and spread over the field in disordered battle or still more disordered flight. The Burgundian left was at once severed from the main body; and Saint-Pol, finding himself overmatched and in danger of being surrounded, retreated to the forest, where he remained inactive, watching the distant eddies of the conflict, and waiting vainly till they should again roll together in a single current. The pursuers, meanwhile, wheeling round upon their left, penetrated the encampment, slaughtered or dispersed its defenders, and captured the artillery—a prize, however, soon abandoned for the plunder of the

[36] Commines, tom. i. pp. 38, 39.—Haynin, tom. i. pp. 34, 35.

wagons, many of them laden with valuables belonging to the Flemish nobles.

In the centre, the Count of Charolais and the scanty force that still encircled his standard kept their faces toward the hill, pressing back the masses in their front, and staving off the bands of fugitives that drifted past their flanks. The slain were many; no quarter was given;[37] and he who went down beneath the thrust of the lance or the stroke of the battle-axe had little chance to rise again. But those who fled far outnumbered those who fell. The men of highest rank were among the first to escape. The king saw himself at length abandoned by all save his body-guard; and, at their persuasion, he retreated up the mount, and took shelter in the castle until the storm should have swept by.[38]

Charles had now a clear field; and, with slackened rein, he continued the pursuit until he had left Montlhéry half a league behind. With a mere handful of followers he had given chase in one direction, while the greater portion of his army had fled in the opposite direction. His impetuosity would have carried him into the midst of a numerous body of the French, who had rallied a little further in advance, if the repeated remonstrances of his officers had not induced him to stop. Making a circuit, he returned on the other side of the hill, still putting to flight such parties of the enemy as crossed his path. As he passed beneath the castle he was surprised by the appearance of the royal guard drawn up in front of the gate. The men-at-arms, riding

[37] "Le grand courroux du comte et de ses gens n'usoit de nulle pitié ny rançon." Haynin, tom. i. p. 38.

[38] De Troyes, Lenglet, tom. ii., p. 28.—Duclercq, tom. iv., p. 171.—Theodoricus Pauli, De Cladibus Leodiensium, De Ram, Docs. relatifs aux troubles du pays de Liége, p. 183.

down, charged his little troop with irresistible force. His standard-bearer, Philippe d'Oignies, Sire de Bruay, and several others, were slain on the spot. Charles himself received a deep sword-thrust in his neck, where a part of his armour, which had been ill secured, had fallen off. He was recognized by the French, who called upon him to surrender; and, though he continued to defend himself with desperate valour, their grasp was already upon him when two of his companions—one of them a man of huge frame, and mounted on a powerful horse—pushed in between him and his assailants, and gave time for each party to reform its ranks. A strong countercharge again cleared the way; and the French retired as they perceived a small body of troops upon the plain advancing to the rescue. It was the Bastard of Burgundy, with the meagre remnant of the right wing. His banner, torn to ribands, but still firmly clenched, showed that he at least had not been recreant to his old renown and the honour of his house.[39]

Though bleeding profusely from his wound, the Count of Charolais mounted a fresh horse, and rode about the field to collect the scattered relics of his army. In mild and persuasive language he appealed to the men not to desert him in his hour of need, but to rally round the standard of their prince.[40] His situation was indeed a critical one. Less than a hundred men remained together in the centre of the plain; and those who had displayed conspicuous courage in the thickest of the fray

[39] Commines, tom. i., pp. 40-43.—Haynin, tom. i., pp. 37, 38.—Lamarche, tom. ii., p. 237.—Relation de la Bataille de Montlhéry, Lenglet, tom. ii., pp. 484-486.

[40] "Allant aval le camp disoit à ceux qu'il trouvoit qui se tiroient au large: 'Mes enfans et mes amys, retournez avec moi, et ne me laissez à cette heure,' et par telle douceur en fit plusieurs retourner." Haynin, tom. i., p. 40.

now surveyed with apprehension their scanty numbers and exposed position, and were ready to take flight at the first gleam of a hostile spear.

Saint-Pol and his men were at length seen coming from the wood in close array, stopping from time to time to pick up the lances which they had thrown away in their retreat. They paid no heed to the urgent messages which were sent to them to quicken their march. Having proved the ill effects of haste and overweening confidence, they now displayed the most admirable caution. With these and other deserters, who returned in parties of a dozen or twenty, Charles found himself, towards evening, surrounded by a force of some eight hundred men-at-arms.

But their temper was not such as allowed him to renew the action. Having run away, they supposed, naturally enough, that they had been defeated. Their opponents, reasoning in their own case from the like premises, had reached a similar conclusion. It had been a rout on both sides—a rout without a pursuit, a defeat without a victory. The roads were thronged with fugitives, flying from those who had gone with equal precipitation in other directions.[41] As they went they spread reports of their disasters: the king was dead; the Count of Charolais was a prisoner. There was a royalist officer who never drew bridle till he reached Lusignan, in Poitou; a Flemish cavalier who rode with the same hot haste to his own house at Quesnoy-le-

[41] "Toufs les chemins estoient couverts de bagues, comme malles, bonges, vaisselles, joyaulx, harnats, chevaulx, qui laisserent cheoir les fuyants, et nuls d'eulx n'avoient loisir de recoueiller de poeur qu'ils avoient, car d'ung costé et d'aultre, il sembloit que les ennemys fuissent a leurs tallons, et sy ne les suivoit on pas." Duclercq, tom. iv., p. 169.

Comte, in Hainault. These two, at least, it was remarked, had no thought of doing each other an injury.[42]

The evening wore away without any effort, on either side, to bring to a second trial the doubtful issue of the fight. Confusion and panic had been succeeded by stupefaction. Having reformed their enclosure of wagons, and thus protected themselves against a surprise, the Burgundians found courage to bethink themselves of the vacant condition of their stomachs. Their supply of provisions was insufficient to assuage their hunger; but they dared not enter the village, where a larger quantity might have been obtained; for a long line of camp fires was burning behind the hedge, and a party sent out to reconnoitre returned with intelligence that the royal army was still in position. Seated on a bundle of straw, close by a heap of slain, Charles had his wound dressed, and shared his draught of *tisane* with a disabled archer, who crawled out from among the corpses. At midnight the principal officers held a council of war. Many of them—Saint-Pol among the number—were in favour of commencing their retreat without delay towards the frontier of Burgundy or of the Netherlands. They painted in colours not too strong for the occasion the dangers of their present situation. But great as these dangers were, those that must attend a retreat were still more appalling. Every town and village along the route would receive them as enemies. The stragglers would be cut off; terror would multiply their perils and complete their dispersion; and the people would seize the opportunity to give a convincing

[42] "Ces deux n'avoient garde de se mordre l'ung l'aultre"—an expression since become proverbial. Commines, tom. i., p. 45.

proof of their loyalty by exterminating the beaten rebels. These arguments—which foreshadowed the fate of those who had already fled[43]—converted even the timid to the opinion of the more courageous. It was determined, as the *safest* course, to renew the action on the following day, in the spirit of men who had no means of retreat, and who must conquer or die upon the field.[44]

At daybreak the trumpets sounded the réveille. The troops prepared for battle, though the greater part looked more inclined for flight. What was their surprise when a carter, bringing a cask of wine from the village, announced to them that the enemy had departed! The grateful tidings were speedily confirmed. The fires which they had watched all night without daring to approach were no sooner lighted than the king had stolen off and continued his march, by a circuitous route, towards Paris. In the Burgundian army despondency now gave place to exultation. Its position was not merely a safe, but a glorious one. Far from having been defeated, it had actually gained the day: it had kept the field, which the enemy had quitted. That the victory was at the best a barren one—that, if not the battle, yet the object of the battle had been lost—was a matter not taken into consideration. There was some talk, indeed, of giving chase; and those who in the

[43] "Pour brief dire, oncques nul homme de nom de ceulx qui s'enffuyoient, n'eschapperent qu'ils ne fuissent prins ou morts; . . . aulcuns povres compagnons eschapperent . . . touts deschirés et en povres habits." Duclercq, tom. iv., p. 174.

[44] "Son advis estoit que chascun se aysast au mieulx qu'il pourroit ceste nuict, et que le matin, à l'aube du jour, on assaillist le Roy, et qu'il falloit là vivre ou mourir: et trouvoit ce chemin plus seur que de prendre la fuyte." Commines, tom. i., p. 48.

night had been the strenuous advocates of retreat were now the most urgent in favour of pursuit. But they were reminded that, to secure the honours of the victory, the rules of chivalry obliged them to spend still another day upon the field, to bury their slain, and to proclaim defiance with sound of trumpet to all who should desire to dispute their claims.[45]

More than two thousand dead bodies—already rifled and stripped by the courageous and industrious camp-

[45] Accounts — most of them by eye-witnesses — of the battle of Montlhéry may be found in Haynin, tom. ii., pp. 28-42; Commines, tom. i., pp. 33-50; Duclercq, tom. iv., pp. 166-172; Lamarche, tom. ii., pp. 236-240; De Troyes, pp. 27-29; Basin, tom. ii., pp. 118-121; Relation de la Bataille (the official report to the Duke of Burgundy, agreeing sufficiently with other narrations, except that a lame attempt is made to excuse the disorders and desertions that had tarnished the triumph of the Burgundian arms). Lenglet, tom. ii., pp. 484-486.

The descriptions given by the two first named authorities might seem, at a cursory glance, to be intended for two totally different transactions. A closer examination will show that there is scarcely any discrepancy in matters of fact. The difference is in the colouring—in the spirit in which the narratives were written. Haynin, a sturdy cavalier, not much addicted to comments or criticisms, gives a literal version of the affair, and sums up his account by awarding, on the grounds noticed in the text, "the *honour* and victory of the day" to the Burgundians, although the French had "gained the most" by their capture of the baggage. Commines, writing in the decline of life, and with more delight in exposing the follies and empty pretensions of his martial contemporaries than in celebrating their achievements, takes his revenge on the youthful enthusiasm that had kept him throughout the day close behind his master—feeling, he tells us, as little fear as he ever felt in his life, and only astonished that any one should dare to oppose so great a prince—by throwing a slight shade of ridicule over all the events, bestowing plentiful sarcasms on those who fled and equivocal commendations on those who fought. His introduction of trivial details—how, for example, his horse, an extremely old and feeble quadruped, thrust his sagacious nose into a pail of wine, and was wonderfully refreshed by the draught — is apparently intended for effect. "Admire," he seems to say, "the *sang-froid* of this four-footed veteran, who had borne himself so gallantly in the *melée*, but did not trouble himself about the glory, or pique himself on his exploits, like a certain young prince, or like many bold cavaliers who returned, after a discreet flight, to claim a share in the victory!"

followers—were found strewn over the plain and on the slopes of the hill.[46] Brezé had fallen in the first charge, while leading the French attack, with the purpose, as Louis persisted in asserting, of forcing a battle which the king was desirous to avoid. On the Burgundian side no one was more lamented than the youthful Philippe de Lalain, a brother of the famous Jacques de Lalain, sprung from a race that never grudged its blood in the service of its prince.[47]

Having remained the usual time upon the field, and received no answer to the challenge thrice delivered by his heralds, the Count of Charolais quitted Montlhéry on the 18th, and set out in search of his allies. At Étampes he was joined by the Bretons, and, a few days later, by the Duke of Bourbon and the Armagnacs. Proceeding eastward to Moret, the united forces encamped upon the borders of the Seine, and waited a fortnight longer for the arrival of the Duke of Calabria and the Marshal of Burgundy. As soon as the distant camp-fires to the southward announced their approach Charles commenced throwing a bridge of boats across the river at a spot where a small island, dividing the stream, facilitated this operation. Rouault, who was stationed on the opposite bank with a considerable force, made a show of disputing the passage, but gave way

[46] "Deux mil hommes du moins," says Commines, who never exaggerates. Other writers say four thousand; De Troyes, who alone pretends to accuracy, says thirty-six hundred.

[47] "Une rasse," remarks Commines (tom. i., p. 19), "dont peu s'en est trouvé qui n'ayent esté vaillans et couraigeux, et presque tous mors en servant leurs seigneurs en la guerre." Another of the family perished in the same campaign,—Simon de Lalain,—of whom a chronicler says, "Il estoit encore jeusne, si avoit il beaucop veu, et beaucop voyagé, si comme au Sainct-Sépulchre, à Sainct-Jacques [de Compostella] à Rome, ès Allemaignes, et au voyage de Turquie." Haynin, tom. i., p. 46.

under the fire of the artillery, ably directed by a royal officer who had been taken prisoner at Montlhéry and who had easily been induced to receive the pay of the confederates, and to exert in their behalf the skill so recently employed for their destruction.

The difficulty of procuring the large supplies necessary for the forces that were now assembled occasioned a long delay before the allies could again commence their march towards the capital. It was there, as all perceived, that the struggle must be decided. If Paris should surrender, no further resistance to the revolution was to be dreaded in any part of the kingdom; and even if it should hold out, Louis, shut up within its walls, and thus deprived of the means of carrying on the war, must soon submit to the terms which his enemies intended to impose. That their power was adequate to the accomplishment of their purpose seemed scarcely to admit of doubt. The army was reckoned at over fifty thousand combatants.[48] The feudal levies of more than twenty provinces, never before marshalled against a common enemy, were now arrayed against the common sovereign. Nor was it from the provinces of France alone that this motley host had been collected. The Duke of Calabria, in addition to his father's vassals, had enrolled under his standard mercenaries from several different nations. His friend the Count Palatine had supplied him with a troop of *schwartzreiters*, or mounted arquebusiers. A body of Italian horse, commanded by Nicholas de Montfort,

[48] According to Commines, indeed, the estimate amounted to a hundred thousand—"tant bons que mauvais." A chronicle cited by Petitot gives as the total of the effective force fifty-one thousand, thus distributed: under the Count of Charolais, 25,000; the Duke of Brittany, 12,000; the Count of Armagnac, 6000; the Duke of Calabria, 5000; the Duke of Bourbon, 3000.

Count of Campobasso, one of the most distinguished *condottieri* of the time—whose history will be found fatally and darkly interwoven with the final scenes of our narrative—attracted especial admiration by the beauty of their arms and the practised ease with which they executed every manœuvre. In striking contrast with this phalanx of steel-clad riders was a little company of infantry—"a kind of simple people"—wearing no defensive armour except a narrow plate of iron strapped across the breast. Their weapons were a pike of enormous length, and a knife to be used in closer combat.[49] They were Swiss; and, as this was the first occasion on which soldiers of that nation had been seen in France—where, however, the fame of their martial valour was not unknown—they attracted much curious attention from the other troops. The Flemish and Burgundian cavaliers would probably have observed them with still more scrutinizing glances, had they foreseen the period, not many years distant, when the hardy Alpine warriors and themselves would be pitted against each other in a contest far sterner and deadlier than that in which they were now engaged upon the same side.

No attempt was made to organise these forces, exhibiting so great a diversity in their composition and appearance, into a single army. Such an attempt would have required, as its necessary condition, unity in the command; and this it would have been impossible to secure. The Duke of Berri, whose rank might otherwise have entitled him to exercise the authority of a commander-in-chief, was as little fitted for the post by his character as by his age. The poor youth, when he found

[49] Duclercq, tom. iv., p. 181.—Haynin, tom. i., p. 44.—Commines, tom. i. p. 62.

the members of his family and the nobility of France so ready to redress his fancied wrongs, trembled at the responsibility which had been thrust upon him. On beholding the wounded Burgundians who had been conveyed in the wagons from Montlhéry, he expressed his compassion in terms attributed to faintheartedness by persons of less sensitive nature. "I had rather," he said, "that this enterprise had never been commenced than see blood thus shed on my account."[50] Turning to the Count of Charolais, "You, too, fair cousin," he said, "have received a hurt." "The fortune of war!" replied Charles, who could scarcely repress his contempt at these unseasonable observations.[51] "What sort of a man must this be," he remarked to some of his intimates, "who is dismayed at the sight of a few hundred wounded men—people that do not belong to him, and whom he does not even know! When the case touches him more nearly, we shall have little reason to rely upon him, I ween."[52] Throughout the army, indeed, the effeminacy of the young prince and of his friend the Duke of Brittany was a common object of derision. They rode together in the centre, on ambling palfreys, in a guise that ill accorded with the pomp and circumstance of war. Their outer vests, of rich satin, were studded with gilt nails; but these, it was whispered, were mere heads without points, not the fastenings of breastplate or brigandine beneath.[53]

In John of Calabria, on the other hand, the Count of

[50] Commines, tom. i., p. 56.

[51] Duclercq, tom. iv., p. 179.

[52] "Avez vous ouy parler cest homme? Il se trouve esbahy pour sept ou huict cens hommes qu'il voit blecez allans par la ville, qui ne luy sont riens, et qu'il ne congnoist: il s'esbahyroit bientost si le cas luy touchoit de quelque chose." Commines, tom. i., p. 56.

[53] Idem, tom. i., p. 64.—Haynin, tom. i., p. 43.

Charolais recognised a spirit like his own—the same eagerness for action, the same thirst for renown, the same promptness and assiduity in the performance of every duty, in enforcing discipline among the soldiers, and in setting before them on all occasions an example of vigilance and of valour. Their friendship led them to continue in company when the combined forces, having crossed the Marne at Charenton, August 20, dispersed to their different posts in the vicinity of the capital. The Bretons occupied the ground about Saint-Maur and the Wood of Vincennes. The Gascons were stationed at Saint-Denis. The Burgundians remained at Charenton, their commander taking up his quarters at Conflans, in a large seignorial mansion standing close upon the margin of the river.[54]

[54] Commines, tom. i., pp. 63, 64.—Duclercq, tom. iv., pp. 182, 183.—Ancienne Chronique, Lenglet, tom. ii., p. 184.—Haynin, tom. i., p. 45.—Lamarche, tom. ii., pp. 244, 245.

CHAPTER VI.

WAR OF THE PUBLIC WEAL. — BLOCKADE OF PARIS — TREATY OF CONFLANS.

1465.

THE king had reached Paris on the evening of July 18, the second day after the battle. He supped with the military governor, Messire Charles de Melun, and described the encounter and his own perils in so moving and eloquent a strain that the company—nobles, ladies, burgesses—were melted to tears.[1]

In the course of a few days the Count of Maine—still intent on serving the wilful monarch in his own despite, and healing the unhappy breach in the royal family—Montauban, admiral of France, and other distinguished fugitives from Montlhéry, found their way into the capital, where they met with a most gracious reception. Not a word of reproach from Louis, whose temper was always smoothest in the most trying situations, in the flood-tide of adversity, when his friends had fallen off, and he must swim or sink alone. Then he reined in his splenetic humours; impatience gave place to prudence, sarcasm to pathos. On the present occasion there was more than one individual whose conduct, had not the king been all serenity and mildness, might have drawn from him censure or complaint. On the morning of

[1] "Et en ce faisant dist et declara de moult beaux mots et piteux, de quoy tous et toutes plorerent bien largement." De Troyes, Lenglet, tom. ii., 29.

the 16th, finding himself unexpectedly in presence of the enemy, he had despatched "three heralds" to Paris demanding instant succours. The field was only five leagues distant: it would have been easy to send out a party, which, falling at the proper moment on the enemy's rear, would have changed his dubious success into utter annihilation. The messengers went through the streets, with trumpeters before them, proclaiming the urgent necessities of the sovereign. But not a soul stirred.[2] A specific demand for a re-enforcement of two hundred lances, under Rouault, was disregarded by Melun.[3] Later in the day, however, when the flying parties of Burgundians were seen from the walls, the garrison and citizens sallied forth to the number of thirty thousand, destroyed the detachment at Saint-Cloud, slew some hundreds of the runaways, captured several prisoners of rank, and returned with booty valued at two hundred thousand crowns.[4]

For these services, and for the loyal answers previously given to the summons of the Count of Charolais, Louis now overflowed with gratitude. He would rather, he declared, have lost the half of his kingdom than have seen his fair city of Paris entered and plundered by the enemy. His singular affection for so faithful a people induced him to issue an edict abolishing the more odious imposts, reducing others, granting new privileges, confirming such as had formerly been called in question.[5]

[2] Duclercq, tom. iv., p. 173.

[3] "Il est accusé d'avoir . . . . empesché le Mareschal Rouault de sortir de Paris, quoique le Roy luy eust escrit que le lendemain il donneroit bataille au Comte de Charolais, et qu'il vinst avec deux cens lances, pour prendre l'ennemy par derriere, ce qui auroit assuré une victoire complete." Extrait du Procès Criminel de Charles de Melun, Lenglet, tom. iii., p. 14.

[4] De Troyes, p. 27.

[5] "Qu'il aimeroit mieux avoir perdu la moitié de son Royaume que mal

But the most conspicuous traits in the present demeanour of a monarch charged by his enemies with perverseness and self-will were his gracious reception of, and readiness to profit by, whatever suggestions or proposals were offered by his subjects in the capital. He had long since protested his willingness to make all possible concessions for the sake of peace. But the princes had given him no opportunity to reveal his conciliatory intentions. Instead of presenting their remonstrances, they had formed a secret league, and rushed abruptly into war.[6] This perfidious and violent procedure will not be imitated in Paris. He is waited upon by a deputation from the municipality, the Parliament, and the University, headed by the bishop—a brother of the chronicler and poet, Alain Chartier—who sets forth their petition in "very beautiful language," all the well-turned phrases circling round the same central point. The king is eloquently besought to allow himself henceforth to be guided in the conduct of his affairs by "good advice."[7] Louis gives a cheerful assent; he will take for his advisers the petitioners themselves; he will enlarge his ordinary council by the addition of six burgesses, six councillors of the Parliament, and six clerks of the University. Thus easily and smoothly is this highly important matter arranged.

The king, in his turn, prefers a small request, that the citizens will arm and enroll themselves as a militia for the defence of their own property and families. An

ne inconvenient venist en ladite Ville. . . . Ayant singulier desir de faire des biens à son Ville de Paris et aux habitans d'icelle, remit," &c. De Troyes, pp. 27, 31.

[6] Lenglet, tom. ii., pp. 449, 450, et al.

[7] "Moult belles paroles, qui toutes tendoient afin que le Roy conduisit de là en avant toutes ses affaires par bon conseil." De Troyes, p. 29.

ordinance to this effect is duly promulgated. But it remains a dead letter. Paris is at this moment rejoicing over the abolition of the taxes; bonfires are blazing; the people flock through the streets, shouting "*Noël!*" [8] It were cruel, at such a time, to insist upon their performing military service.

Yet something must be done. Rejoicings and bonfires will not keep out the enemy; the resources of the government are nowise increased by the reduction of the taxes. The only quarter from which succours can now be looked for is Normandy. That great province is near at hand: and it is under the direct control of the crown, to which it of course reverted after its conquest from the English. There is now no "Duke of Normandy," able and ready to answer with a bold defiance the requisition to comply with his feudal obligations by coming with ban and arrière-ban to his sovereign's relief. On the other hand, there is no person in the province whose authority and influence are such as can be relied upon to give effect to the royal orders for raising the necessary levies. Brezé, who was both loved and feared by the inhabitants,[9] lies among the slain at Montlhéry; and his widow administers the government in the name of her son, the hereditary seneschal. Thanks to the loyal zeal of the Count of Eu, whose estates lie in Normandy, the free archers, or civic militia, are already armed and

[8] "Incontinent après ledit cry tout le populaire crioient de joye et de bon vouloir, *Noel, Noel.* Et en furent faits les feux parmy les ruës de ladite Ville." De Troyes, p. 31.

[9] "Est fort amé et craint de Normandie," says the English agent, Neville, Preuves de Commines (ed. Dupont), tom. iii., p. 214. Even Louis, at this crisis, could not but acknowledge the loss he had sustained in this able and experienced politician. "Dit . . . . qu'il avoit beaucoup perdu au grand seneschal de Normandie." Procès de Charles de Melun, Lenglet, tom. iii., p. 15.—"Fust moult plaint pour le bien et valliance de lui." Duclercq, tom. iv., p. 175.

equipped. But the nobles will not move until Louis calls them to the field in person. He is in great perplexity. He cannot rely upon the fidelity of the capital unless he remains in it; he cannot obtain the means for its defence unless he quits it. Luckily the enemy seems in no haste to approach, retarded by the want of supplies and still more by the want of union and of a single directing head. There may still be time before the city is invested to bring up the Norman levies.

Yet the king is loth to go,—"right loth," as Shylock to leave his daughter and his money-bags while maskers are abroad, albeit he has given orders that his "house's ears" be stopped. He fears that, when his back is turned, Jessica will "clamber up to the casements;" that the prowler's lingering steps will be quickened by beckonings and signals from within. He sets out, indeed, on Saturday, August 10, taking with him the Count of Maine, whose mediatorial propensities are thus debarred the opportunity for exercise. But the same day he sends word back to the municipal authorities, assembled in "grand council" at the Hôtel de Ville, that he has changed his mind, and will return again on Tuesday. He sends also directions for quartering and billeting the Norman archers as fast as they arrive. On the 13th he sends the Count of Eu to take command as his lieutenant in place of Melun, whom he compensates, however, for this removal, by appointing him to a higher post, that of grand-master of the household; from which, three years hence, in reward for his services at this same period, he will elevate him to the scaffold.[10] On Tuesday the king returns, but stays only

[10] Melun was condemned and executed on a charge of having maintained a treasonable correspondence with the confederates, of which his own confes-

long enough to see that all is quiet and apparently secure, and to witness an exhibition intended for the amusement, perhaps also for the edification, of the people. A varlet who made himself conspicuous in raising the false alarm at the time of the first arrival of the Burgundians is whipped at the cart's tail by the common hangman. The king, in a loud voice, admonishes that functionary to lay on well, for the punishment is richly deserved.[11] Having given this gentle hint to such as are timorously disposed, he at last sets forth upon his mission.[12]

The sharp eyes of her suspicious guardian withdrawn from her, Paris breathes more freely, and ventures to take a glance at the approaching confederates, the enemies of the king's domestic peace. They are still far distant, having just completed their preparations and turned their faces towards the capital. But already (August 17) "many notable persons, of different professions," wait upon the king's lieutenant, and represent the propriety of his endeavouring "to make some good arrangement of peace and agreement with the princes, which shall tend to the honour of the sovereign and the consolation and profit of the realm." Two days later the allies are close at hand; and the wealthier citizens, who have their gardens and vineyards in the suburbs,

sion, amounting to little and extorted by torture, seems to have been the chief evidence adduced. There is stronger proof that he had endeavoured to gain an undue personal influence with the populace of Paris—a circumstance which justified the king's suspicions and explains the vindictive feeling so long and secretly cherished. See Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii., pp. 371–374.

[11] "Le Roy crioit à haute voix au bourreau, batez fort et n'espargnez point ce paillard, car il a bien pis desservy." De Troyes, Lenglet, tom. ii., p. 33.

[12] Idem, pp. 32, 33.

see with dismay the troops beginning to occupy these pleasant summer quarters. Heralds arrive bearing letters from the Duke of Berri, who styles himself regent, addressed to the clergy, the municipality, the University, and the Parliament, wherein he requests that a deputation may be sent to him from each of these bodies, to whom he will make known the reasons why he and the members of his family have assembled in arms, and will satisfy them that it is for no other object than the "universal good of the kingdom of France." Compliance with so fair a request is demanded by simple courtesy; and accordingly a selection is made of thirteen persons, —magistrates, doctors in theology, advocates, and others, —"the reverend father in God the before-named Guillaume Chartier, bishop of the diocese, having charge to conduct them to the place of conference, and to direct their proceedings." [13]

It is at the Château de Beauté that the king's brother has taken up his residence. Here he receives the delegation, seated in state, while round him stand the other "seigneurs of the blood of France," among whom the victor of Montlhéry is conspicuous, attired, unlike the rest, in the complete panoply of war. Dunois is chosen as the orator to explain the motives and the purposes of the allies. He inveighs in general terms against the tyranny of Louis, urges the necessity of a reform in the government, hints at an assembly of the Three Estates as the proper body to devise efficacious remedies, and finally, adopting a blunter and more characteristic tone, demands the admission of the confederates into the capital within two days, threatening a general assault if the

[13] De Troyes, Lenglet, tom. ii., pp. 34, 35.

demand be not complied with. The bishop replies in his usual mild and elegant phraseology, evading a direct answer until he and his colleagues shall have rendered their report and received further instructions. When the conference closes, each of the deputies finds himself engaged in private conversation by one or other of the princes, and is made acquainted with some particular reasons for exerting his influence in favour of the concessions demanded by the allies.[14] In truth, the classes which these men represent are secretly not ill disposed to such a step. The clergy and the University have their own grounds of hostility to Louis. The lawyers, the wealthier tradesmen, all those persons who from vanity or the prospect of gain are the natural dependants of an aristocracy, have a strong desire to see the great hotels again occupied each with its little court, crowded with suitors, resplendent with hospitality, scattering favours and the gold of the provinces, and shaming the king into a style of living befitting his exalted dignity. Each of the princes has his own agents, his own adherents, the hereditary clients of his house. The Burgundian party is especially numerous, animated by traditional sympathies and by recollections of the Good Duke Philip and of the magnificent *fêtes* of the Hôtel d'Artois. There is even a sentimental attachment to the person of the young Duke of Berri, who is reputed to bear a close resemblance to his father, and to have the same benign disposition and sagacious intellect. Finally there are those who, neither the partisans of the confederates nor the enemies of the king, are more dangerous and unscrupulous than either—men of purely

[14] Commines, tom. i., pp. 71, 72.—Haynin, tom. i., p. 45.—Barante (ed. Gachard), tom. i. p. 245.

timid character, who, to remove the present evil, to avert the immediate danger, are ready to yield at once to the demands of the stronger party, to accept of any peace when the alternative is war.[15]

The notables of the city, assembled (August 24) to deliberate on these demands, find in them nothing unreasonable. The proposition for a meeting of the Three Estates has already been mooted; it forms, indeed, the burden of the ballads and pasquinades that have circulated for a month past.[16] Nor does it seem right, or even decorous, to refuse admittance into the capital to the members of the royal family, provided they give sufficient guaranties for the peaceable behaviour of their followers. It is determined that an answer shall be sent to them to this effect; but, before the deputies can set forth, a tumult in the street announces that there, at least, the proposal to throw open the gates and allow the enemy to enter is not so favourably received. The cause of royalty, assailed by the princes and the nobles, abandoned or betrayed by its sworn defenders, is suddenly espoused by the lowest orders of the people, moved not by any love to Louis, but by a natural instinct of resistance. An excited mob has gathered in front of the Hôtel de Ville, and it is found necessary to call out the civic guard to protect the freedom of debate. The Count of Eu avails himself of this occasion to hold a review of his troops. Two hundred lances and ten times as many archers file slowly through the streets—whether to preserve order among the people or to remind the municipal authorities that the king's interests have

[15] Commines, tom. i., p. 65.—Basin, tom. ii., p. 123.

[16] See a specimen or two of these pasquinades in Duclercq, tom. iv., pp. 157, 158.

not been confided solely to their keeping is a matter for consideration. The discussion becomes languid. Voices are heard without demanding the heads of the traitors who have sold the city to the confederates. To complete the events of the day, a letter is received from Louis announcing that he has assembled the Norman levies, and has already set out upon his return. Montauban, sent forward with a portion of these forces, is on the point of arriving. Under these circumstances it is thought best that the deputies shall carry back a message that the king's officers will not allow the gates to be opened without his permission. It is observed that the bishop, when he delivers the message, has lost his usual serenity of utterance and deportment. He stammers, and is half inaudible. The Count of Dunois answers with a fierce reiteration of his former menace. Between these opposite perils the "notables" may well be embarrassed. But the crisis is happily passed. The city is not assaulted, and on the 28th Louis arrives.[17]

Such is the glimpse which we get at the state of affairs during his absence—an interval of a fortnight. Apprised of all that was passing, he had collected with incredible despatch two thousand Norman lances, a proportionate number of archers, pikemen, and other infantry, artillery, large supplies of provisions,—all that was necessary for "recomforting a distressed people,"—resolving at the same time that if this final effort should prove vain, and his return to the capital—the last stronghold of his power—were cut off, he would abandon the hopeless struggle, and seek a refuge in Switzerland or

[17] De Troyes, pp. 36, 37.—Commines, tom. i., pp. 72, 73.—Barante (ed. Gachard), tom. ii., p. 246.—Michelet, tom. vi., p. 117.

Milan.[18] Thanks to his own vigilance and activity, he was still a king; and those who had so lately forgotten the fact trembled when his presence at the head of an army brought it back to their recollection. But Louis, if a tyrant, was not one of the ordinary stamp. He sometimes tasted the sweets of vengeance, but he was not a gourmand. He sometimes had recourse to the efficacy of terror; but he used it cautiously, knowing that it was a weapon with a double edge. On an occasion like the present it was the last instrument which he would have chosen to employ. He displayed, on his return, a more than Christian magnanimity. He knew nothing of what had taken place, save that the city had been summoned, and that the good burghers had answered with a stout defiance. The warmth of his emotions made it necessary that he should thank them individually for this fresh proof of their attachment. He went his rounds from street to street, from house to house, dining with one citizen, supping with another, bestowing lavish commendations upon all.[19] A few of the public servants were dismissed from their offices; and four or five of the deputies, who had taken the most active part in the negotiations with the princes, received a private intimation to remove from the capital. This was the only notice taken of the intended treason at the time; but Louis, as we have before remarked, had a long memory.[20]

[18] "Plusieur fois il m'a dict que s'il n'eust peu entrer dedans Paris, et qu'il eust trouvé la ville muee, il se fust retiré devers les Suisses ou devers le duc de Millan, Francisque, qu'il reputoit son grant amy." Commines, tom. i., p. 73.

[19] Du Haillant, ap. Petitot, note to Commines.

[20] The more striking indications of the tenacity of his memory in connexion with the events of this period will hereafter be noticed. A somewhat whimsical instance was his in-

His authority in the capital was now undisputed and supreme. Conspiracy was paralysed. Those who had tampered with the functions of royalty grew suddenly absorbed by their private affairs. No one felt emboldened by the graciousness of the king's demeanour to recommend any further changes in the government, or to suggest the terms on which he should sue for peace.[21] When he convoked the magistrates and other principal inhabitants of the city, and gave them his reasons for not complying with the demands of the confederates, no voice was raised to dispute the wisdom of his policy. His present force was sufficient not only to keep Paris in subjection, but to repel any attack that might be made by the enemy. Every morning a troop of Norman nobles sallied out to skirmish with the Burgundian men-at-arms, or to cut off the parties of foragers that were scattered among the neighbouring villages. Every evening they returned to relate their exploits to the ladies, from whose applauding smiles they drew fresh inspiration for the encounters of the morrow.[22] Sometimes they brought back with them prisoners of rank, from whom, after the fashion of the time, they exacted heavy ransoms. At other times they drove in a herd of half-naked wretches—camp-followers or such-like vagrants—who had wandered beyond the lines to pillage, and who, having no means wherewith to re-

sisting, when the bishop—"a person of saintly life and great learning"—died, in 1472, on placing upon his tombstone a record of the part he had taken in the conferences with the confederates. De Troyes, p. 93.

[21] "Ainsi fut ceste praticque rompue, et tout ce peuple bien mué: depuis ne se fust trouvé homme . . . qui plus eust osé parler de la marchandise." Commines, tom. i., p. 73.

[22] "Puis veoient les dames tous les jours, qui leur donnoient envie de se monster." Commines, tom. i., p. 75.

deem themselves, were put up at auction, and sold, like wild fowl, four for a crown.[23]

The confederates, on their side, confined themselves to similar enterprises. In spite of their numerical superiority, in spite of their boastful menaces, they neither laid regular siege to the capital nor maintained any effective blockade. The market-boats which descended the Seine and the Marne found their passage uninterrupted; and, while the population of the city was swollen by the addition of a large military force, supplies were so abundant that even in the price of bread the rise was scarcely perceptible. The war, instead of interfering with the course of trade, had imparted to it greater freedom and briskness.[24] It is doubtful, however, whether this inactivity on the part of the allies proceeded from incapacity or from policy. On the one hand, they were restrained, by a fear of cutting off their own supplies and exciting the hostility of the people, from offering any molestation to commerce[25] or inflicting distress upon the inhabitants of Paris, while it is equally clear that they were incapable of acting in concert, and of devising any plan of operations for driving the king from his defensive position.

[23] "Furent pris bien vingt ou vingt-quatre paillards Calabriens et Bourguignons, tous nud et mal en point, qui tous furent vendus au butin, et en donnoit-on quatre pour un escu, qui est au dit prix six sous six deniers parisis la piece." De Troyes, p. 41.

[24] Commines, tom. i., p. 74.—Lamarche, tom. ii., p. 246.

[25] The Gascons were subsidized by Charles, to induce them to abstain from pillage. (Commines, tom. i., p. 76.) See also the order given by the Bastard of Burgundy for the release of a company of merchants captured by his troops, and the restoration of their property: "En considéracion à l'armée que présentement se met sus pour le bien de ce royaulme et non pas pour empescher que marchandise n'eyt cours en icelluy; sçachant véritablement l'intencion de mon très redoubté seigneur monseigneur de Charrolois estre ainsi fondée; nous vous ordonnons," &c. Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii., p. 260.

They kept at a safe distance from the walls, expecting Louis to act the part of a chivalric hero and lead forth his forces to battle. They had the best disposition in the world to fight, if they could but get the opportunity. They were overjoyed, therefore, when, one night, a messenger—sent, as he pretended, by their friends in the city—came to the banks of the river opposite to the head-quarters of the Count of Charolais, and announced the king's intention on the following day to make an attack upon this point with his whole army. At an early hour the Burgundians were astir. The leaders assembled to make their dispositions; even the Dukes of Berri and Brittany arrived, armed to the teeth. John of Calabria was in a fever of expectation. He acted as Charles's lieutenant, visited every part of the camp, and, riding along the ranks, encouraged the men with the assurance that the long wished for hour had arrived. The morning was dark, the earth covered with fog. A party of cavaliers, sent across the river to reconnoitre, returned with intelligence that the enemy's lances were approaching in great force. Cannon were heard booming in the distance; and some bullets, thrown from the walls of Paris, two leagues off, actually fell within the Burgundian lines.[26] How great was the disappointment felt by all these gallant and excited hearts when, the fog clearing away, no enemy was to be seen! A group of lofty thistles, magnified by the mist, had been mistaken by the scouts for a troop of cavalry![27]

On another occasion the royal infantry, several thou-

[26] "Le Roy avoit bonne artillerie sur la muraille de Paris, qui tira plusieurs coups jusques à nostre ost, qui est grant chose (car il y a deux lieues), mais je croy bien que l'on avoit levé aux bastons le nez bien hault." Commines, tom. i., p. 89.

[27] Idem, tom. i., pp. 87–90.

sand strong, followed at some distance by the Norman lances, sallied out at night, threw up an entrenchment, and constructed a line of batteries along the river, opposite to Conflans. In the morning they opened fire from a great number of pieces, forcing the Duke of Calabria, whose troops were the most exposed, to decamp precipitately. The château occupied by the Count of Charolais was also a prominent mark. Two of the balls entered the room where he sat at dinner—one of them killing an attendant who was carrying a dish to set upon the table. The Burgundian cannon, with the exception of some enormous pieces that could not easily be moved, were placed in position behind a pierced wall; and a brisk fire—the heaviest, indeed, Commines tells us, he ever heard—was interchanged throughout several successive days. At the same time Charles gave orders for the construction of a bridge lower down the stream, intending to cross with his whole army and take the enemy in flank. When this work was completed, preparations were made for commencing the passage at the dawn of the following day. A solemn mass was celebrated; and the soldiers shrived themselves, and performed the other offices of good Christians about to encounter a great peril. In the night, however, those who were awake perceived signs of movement in the opposite trenches. Presently voices were heard shouting through the darkness, "Adieu, neighbours, adieu!" and flames shooting up into the air showed that the royalists had set fire to the huts which they had constructed for their temporary accommodation, and stolen back into the town.[28]

[28] Commines, tom. i., pp. 77–81.—Lamarche, tom. ii., p. 244.

Nothing, indeed, was farther from the king's thoughts than again to put his cause to the hazard of a battle.[29] He could not afford to lose another army, whether by defeat or by desertion. His policy was to weary out the patience of his enemies by tantalising sallies and feigned attacks, trusting to those natural causes of dissension which could hardly fail to exist in so heterogeneous a mass for breaking up the combination and effecting his deliverance. Nor was he likely to neglect any opportunity that should present itself of treating separately with such of the members of the league as he might hope to detach from it by the employment of those arts of seduction in which he was so thoroughly versed. To negotiations carried on under his own eye he had no objection; and he empowered Maine, whose tastes seemed to qualify him for diplomacy rather than for war, to treat with the Counts of Saint-Pol and Dunois, the commissioners appointed by the princes. On the days on which the conferences were held a truce was proclaimed; and the idlers of both armies flocked to the place of meeting to interchange gossip and to purchase the articles brought thither for sale by the hucksters and camp-followers. Nor was this the only kind of trade that was carried on. The number on either side was not inconsiderable of those who were tempted by the allurements held out to them to dispose of their allegiance, and make profit by a change of service. A ditch divided the two parties; but this was a slight obstacle to desertion. Sometimes it was crossed by a score of royalists; at other times by as large a body of the insurgents. The scene of these transactions

[29] Commines, tom. i., pp. 76, 81.—Basin, tom. ii., p. 123.

received the name of "the Market," which it continued to bear long after it had again become a solitude.[30]

In the mean time no progress was made by the negotiators in arranging terms of peace. The discussions, indeed, were of a friendly character—somewhat too friendly, it might be doubted. Maine, like a good diplomatist, had done his best to recommend himself to the favour of those with whom he was to treat, sending as presents to the Duke of Berri and the other princes casks of choice wine and loads of fruits and vegetables—articles which, it would seem, were more plentiful in the city than in the camp.[31] He had forgotten, however, that it was on the sovereign's behalf that he had been authorised to act. His own views, his own scruples, his own interests formed the real subject of discussion. What he required from the confederates was an explanation in regard to their design—an assurance that it was not directed against the king; that it was, in truth, altogether loyal in its nature, tending to the general benefit of the nation and of the crown.[32] When his doubts on these points had been removed,—having received a further pledge from the allies that they would, in any event, maintain him in the possession of his estates,—he could see no objection to expressing his concurrence—secretly, that is to say—in their views.

[30] Commines, tom. i., pp. 81, 82.

[31] De Troyes, p. 38.

[32] "Certiffions et asseurons à nostre très chier et très amé oncle et cousin le conte du Maine, que nostre intencion et les causes pourquoy sumes joings et unis ensemble, sont tendeues tout à bonne fin pour le bien du royaulme et chose publicque d'icelluy, sans avoir voulonté de rien entrerompre ne toucher à la personne de monseigneur le roy ne à la couronne." Accord entre les princes ligués et Charles d'Anjou, comte du Maine, Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii., p. 384.

So that, in fact, his negotiations resulted in a treaty, which, however, he did not at present deem it necessary to submit for the ratification of the king.[33]

Affairs were taking an inauspicious turn for Louis. His enemies displayed little vigour, it is true; but they held their ground with dogged perseverance. The king was blockaded, if the city was not. He was debarred from all those healthful excursions which had become the regular routine of his existence—visits to the "good towns," pilgrimages to the shrines of Our Lady, quiet tours of inspection throughout the kingdom, where he saw every thing with his own eyes, contriving often to remain himself unseen. Even his imagination was imprisoned. It was impossible for him to see visions of another province added to the domain of the crown, another strip of territory skilfully purloined from Aragon and annexed to France, another stroke of policy like that which had made him master of Savoy, when his actual possessions had shrunk within the limits of his bodily sight. In his prison he was still a king, but with no revenues flowing into his exchequer, no vassals coming to do him homage, no envoys arriving from foreign courts—nothing wherewith to while away the time but a daily correspondence with his friend Sforza, who gave him excellent advice, if he could but have had

[33] The agreement bears the date of September 18, the day on which, the chroniclers tell us, negotiations were broken off. (De Troyes, p. 41.) Louis, who had perhaps permitted the negotiation as much for the amusement of Maine as with the view of sounding the allies, was not deceived. His reasons for dissembling appear from a remark which he made to Melun. "He told me that his said uncle (of Maine) was a man of a strange character, and difficult to manage; that it was, nevertheless, necessary to do every possible thing to content him, since, if he were lost, the king would have no prince of his blood left on his side." Procès de Charles de Melun, Lenglet, tom. iii., p. 15.

the opportunity to follow it, for sowing divisions among his enemies and profiting thereby.[34] Nothing but this —and listening to the murmurs in the streets, and to the epigrams upon his ministers and upon himself, of which, in spite of his presence and that of his army, there was still a perpetual flood. He was in danger of losing his temper when he saw how little the giddy Parisians sympathised with his anxieties, how little they appreciated his efforts in behalf of the nation. Was a truce proclaimed? The whole population poured out to view the enemy's encampment, to get news of what was going on, to trade with the soldiers, to listen to their boastings and persuasions. It was in vain that Louis issued an order that on these occasions no person should leave the city. Unless he had turned his artillery upon them, as he was tempted to do, there were no means of preventing the inhabitants from indulging their curiosity. His sole resource was to station officers at the gates to take down the names of those who returned![35] It was not enough for these people that they paid no taxes; that the army had brought large supplies with it from Normandy; that the price of provisions was no higher than in time of peace. They raised a clamour about every petty larceny committed by the troops; and if a girl had chanced to be seduced by an archer of the guard, her parents came to the king to demand justice! His favourite minister, good Bishop Balue—an invaluable person, whom he was afterwards reluctantly, but by stern necessity, compelled to shut up in a cage—was assaulted one night in a public street, and beaten nearly to death. The king was to be held

[34] Basin, tom. ii., p. 124.

[35] De Troyes, p. 39.

responsible even for the ravages committed by the enemy outside the walls. When he strove to cheer the citizens by promising that they should not long be vexed by the presence of the confederates, "Ay, sire," was the grumbling answer, "but in the mean time they are eating our grapes and spoiling our vines." "It is better," was the sharp and ominous retort, "that they should eat your grapes and spoil your vines, than that they should get into your cellars, and find the hoards of silver that you keep concealed." [36]

It became more and more evident that in this trial of endurance Louis was the losing party. He determined, therefore, to make an attempt in earnest to bring about a settlement; in other words, he resolved to open negotiations in person. To whom should he address himself? He would doubtless have found it easy to make a satisfactory arrangement with the Duke of Berri; but it was not to be supposed that the other leaders were simple enough to permit him to have a private conference with his brother. On the other hand, it would have been a mere waste of time to treat with any one whose defection from his party would not so weaken it as to ensure its speedy downfall. There was no course open to the king but a direct appeal to the most formidable of his enemies —the most powerful and the most determined. The army of the Count of Charolais, reinforced by fresh arrivals from the Netherlands, outnumbered the united forces of his allies; his father's treasury supplied him

[36] "Un nommé Pierre Beron lui respondit: Voire, Sire, mais ils vendangent nos vignes et mangent nos raisins sans y sçavoir remedier. Et le Roy repliqua qu'il valloit mieux qu'ils vendengeassent lesdites vignes et mangeassent lesdits raisins, que ce qu'ils vinssent dedans Paris prendre leurs tasses et vaillant qu'ils avoient mis et mussez dedans leurs caves et celiers." De Troyes, p. 40.

with the means of subsidising the poorer leaders; and his own stubborn resolution was the soul of the enterprise, from which it derived whatever unity and vigour it displayed. As long as Charles kept the field, Louis must remain shut up in the capital. If the propositions made by Louis were accepted by Charles, the rest of the confederates would lose no time in making their submission.

At the hour appointed for the interview the Burgundian leader, surrounded by his principal officers, took his station at the side of the river in front of his quarters, and awaited the arrival of the king's boat. As it approached the landing-place, Louis, who had brought with him only four or five attendants, stood forward, and, addressing the Count of Charolais, said, "My brother, have I assurance for my safety?" "The assurance of a brother, Monseigneur," was the reply. Stepping on shore, the king opened the conversation in his habitual tone of frankness and good-humour. "My brother, now I know that you are indeed descended from this royal house of France. You sent me word that before a year was gone I should rue the pleasantries uttered by my foolish chancellor at Lille; and truly I have found cause to rue them, and that long before the year is out. You are a man of your word, my brother; and it is with such men that I desire to have dealings." When, on the weaker side, there was this candid acknowledgment of error and of inferiority, it might be hoped that on the stronger side a corresponding magnanimity would be displayed:[37] while the allusion

[37] "Et dict le Roy ces parolles en bon visaige et riant, congnoissant la nature de celluy á qui il parloit estre telle, qu'il prendroit plaisir ausdictes parolles." Commines, tom. i., p. 93.

to Charles's fidelity in keeping engagements of a hostile character was doubtless intended to remind him of the sacredness of the pacific pledge he had just given. Referring in a more serious tone to the invectives which had drawn forth a menace so punctually executed, Louis disavowed his own responsibility in the matter, protesting that he had given no charge to Morvilliers to make use of language so offensive. Then, placing himself between the Counts of Charolais and Saint-Pol, he began to walk up and down, entering into a full and lengthy discussion of the means of restoring peace.

It was not in his character to have sought such an interview as the present, unless he had been prepared to make the largest concessions. A war for the public advantage meant, as he well knew, a war for the private advantage of all who could be induced to embark in it;[38] and having once settled in his own mind the necessity of yielding, of acknowledging his embarrassments, of announcing his bankruptcy, he was impatient to extricate himself from his present intolerable position by settling all demands and obtaining a discharge. Accordingly the personal claims preferred by the Count of Charolais were allowed without demur. The towns on the Somme should be given up, with a pledge that no attempt would again be made to redeem them during Charles's life. The counties of Boulogne and Guines were to be settled on him and his heirs in perpetuity. To the Count of Saint-Pol Louis offered the place of Constable of France—an elevation which

[38] "Le bien public estoit converty en bien particulier." Commines, loc. cit.

might well be thought sufficient to satisfy the ambition of that aspiring noble, while it could not fail to be in the highest degree agreeable to his friend. Nor did the king display a different spirit when he came to deal with the pretensions of the Dukes of Brittany, Calabria, and Bourbon, and with those of the Armagnacs. He expressed his assent to the conditions on which these powerful vassals were severally ready to lay aside the sword. The inferior members of the league were also to be gratified to the full extent of their hopes; places and pensions were to be distributed without stint among those who, by their late exertions for the public weal, had earned the gratitude of the crown and proved their ability to serve it.

These questions settled, what remained? The most difficult of all—that which related to the Duke of Berri. One of the principal motives which had been alleged by the confederates in justification of their appeal to arms was their desire to secure to that prince the position to which he was entitled by his birth. His brother, it was argued, in making no adequate provision for him had departed from the ordinary practice, and set a precedent dangerous to the rights of all the members of the royal family. It was necessary that Charles of France should take his place at the head of the great vassals—in other words, that the crown should be despoiled of some of its fairest possessions, in order that another princely house should rise by the side of those that already exercised sovereign sway over so large a portion of the realm. Thus the system was to be perpetuated by which, from generation to generation, the territory of France was parcelled out among the

princes of the blood, until the monarchy should have returned to its condition under the feeble successors of Charlemagne, or until its very name became extinct.

Yet, even on this point, Louis—ever more inclined to deviate for a time, at least, from his direct line of policy than to waste his strength in struggling with insuperable obstacles—had made up his mind to a sacrifice which might have seemed intended to anticipate the cravings of an exorbitant cupidity. Nevertheless it did not come up to the mark drawn by the allies. They had themselves made choice of the province which the king was to bestow upon his brother. What was their selection? Normandy. Normandy! the largest and the most productive of his territories; the province which contributed more than one-third of all the revenues of the crown; which had just furnished him with the means that alone enabled him to make a stand against his assailants; which in the hands of the enemies of France had so often afforded them the means of conquering the whole kingdom, and treating it as a subject state; which had been redeemed after so long a struggle and at so great a cost of blood; which was so situated — flanked on the one side by the duchy of Brittany, and on the other by the dominions of the house of Burgundy; fronting the coast of England, where ruled the descendants of its former sovereigns, and commanding the passage from the sea to the very doors of the capital—that, if severed from the monarchy, it must become the impregnable seat of an independent power, fatal to the existence of the monarchy;—here was a demand by which the king might well be startled. He had already made concessions involving the loss of all the ground which he had

gained since his accession and the abandonment of his most cherished schemes. But he was now asked to surrender what had been won not by himself, but by his ancestors; won not through secret intrigues, but in a popular and glorious war; won not from native princes and vassals, but from the foreign aggressor, the hereditary foe. Impossible! Such a surrender would be not defeat alone, not disgrace alone, but ruin.[39]

But it was in vain that Louis strove with his usual eloquence to modify the sentiments of his opponent and to lead him to the consideration of less outrageous terms. In vain he brought forward his counter proposition—offering, in place of Normandy, Champagne and La Brie, provinces comprising an almost equal extent of territory, while in other respects less important. All his arguments were wasted on the iron temper of the man whom he addressed, among whose qualities none was more remarkable than the stubbornness of his resolution, his constancy in adhering to his purposes and plans, the tenacity with which he clung to the object in his grasp. There were many reasons why Charles might well have been tempted to close with the king's proposals. The confederacy, as he well knew, was bound together by a cord too slender to endure a constant and prolonged strain. His own superior power, the victory which he had gained at Montlhéry without their assistance, had excited feelings of jealousy in the breasts of his allies. The Armagnacs had begun to negotiate with Louis on their own account.[40] The Duke of Berri, as had been

[39] The king's views on this point are to be found, under his own hand, in a document from which we shall hereafter have occasion to quote—the instructions given by him, in January, 1466, to his envoys to the Count of Charolais. Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii., p. 423, et seq.

[40] De Troyes, p. 38.

seen, was not a man in whom to repose confidence. Why risk the successes already achieved on the chance of obtaining for this timid and vacillating prince a position of which he could not appreciate the advantages, a power which he was not competent to use? The objects with which the Count of Charolais had enlisted in the enterprise were now attained. He had extorted all, and more than all, that he had originally sought. It required only his own concurrence to assure to him the fruits of victory. He had obtained similar terms for his associates. He might, therefore, close the campaign in triumph and with untarnished honour. He had also a strong personal motive for desiring to bring the war to an immediate conclusion. Every day he received messages from his father urging him to return home and take command of an expedition against Liége. The turbulent people of that state, having formed an alliance offensive and defensive with the French monarch, had proclaimed war against the Duke of Burgundy, and ravaged the borders of Luxembourg and Brabant. They had already suffered a defeat from the forces sent against them by Philip; but an attack by enemies so despicable was itself an insult to so great a prince for which no chastisement could be too severe. With the temerity of weakness they seemed to tempt their doom by renewed preparations, by exultant threats, and by infamous contumelies directed against the illustrious house the weight of whose power they had so often felt. These events could not but rouse in Charles's mind as stern a feeling as in Philip's. He had vowed, indeed, to make terrible reprisals; and none could doubt that this vow would be performed to the letter.—Yet, being thus sure, vengeance might be deferred. The

stroke by which Louis was prostrated and disarmed would be to his wretched allies an omen of their own fate. From so wily a foe it was vain to exact conditions that did not carry in themselves the pledge of their fulfilment. His own terms were liberal because easy to elude. In Champagne his brother would be within his reach—to be duped by his professions, to be caught by his snares, to be crushed, when the opportunity should arise, by his arms. In Normandy the prince would be less exposed. There he would be surrounded by friends. He would be able to maintain a constant intercourse with his advisers and protectors—to receive assistance, in any emergency, not only from the Count of Charolais on the one side, but from the Duke of Brittany on the other. Above all, the king's ambition would thus be effectually bridled. An unbroken line of hostile spears would for ever confront him. Conterminous provinces, with an uninterrupted line of sea-coast from Flanders to Poitou, would be in the hands of the confederates. Their league would be perpetual. If they needed additional strength, they had but to invite the King of England to the dominions of his ancestors, through which would lie his passage, undefended and unimpeded, to the throne still claimed as his rightful inheritance.[41]

[41] "Existimabant enim [principes et socii factionis] non imprudenter quod, ubi Normanniam assecutus foret (quæ, sine aliqua intermedia terra, ex uno extremo duci Britanniæ, ex altero vero, modico excepto intervallo [and this intermediate territory, it must be remembered, comprised Calais, still in the hands of the English, and Picardy, which by the proposed treaty was to be restored to the house of Burgundy] terris ducis Burgundiæ conterminat) ipsos tres principes, ita se ipsis vicinantes, facile se contra regem et alios sibi fœderatos posse tutari ac defendere (cum etiam et littorâ maris tenuissent, a finibus Flandriæ usque Pictaviam), et per hoc eorum potentiæ atque viribus, sic conterminantibus et conjunctis, regem verisimiliter prævalere non posse; contra quem etiam, si ingrueret necessitas, facile ab Anglia possent auxilia obtinere." Basin, tom. ii., p. 127.—See also the remark of Com-

Here, therefore, was a vital question at issue—a conflict not of adverse interests alone, but of hostile principles. On the preservation of Normandy depended that of the French monarchy. Restored to its place among the great fiefs, and firmly cemented with the others, that province would become the keystone of the arch that supported the fabric of feudalism. It was a question which both parties viewed in its true aspect; and when this became apparent — when each had proved the other's strength and found him immoveable —it was useless to continue the discussion. In spite of his disappointment, Louis, in taking leave of the count, preserved the same tone with which he had at first greeted him. He invited Charles to visit him at Paris; but the temerity of the monarch—a strange temerity, that excited the astonishment of the whole army—was not to be imitated by a subject. The count excused himself on the plea of a vow which forbade him to enter the gates of a town until he should return to his father's provinces. Leaving a liberal present to be distributed among the archers of the Burgundian guard, Louis entered his boat and returned to Paris.[42]

He returned to Paris—to his prison-house. Were not the walls closing around him? Had not the air become stifling? "*His Normandy!*"—must this indeed be the price of liberty? It was but a few months since all his schemes had appeared to prosper; and now he stood on the brink of destruction.

He would not abandon the negotiation, unpromising

mines, "La chose du monde qu'il [le Comte de Charolais] desiroit le plus, c'estoit de veoir ung duc en Normandie, car par ce moyen il luy sembloit le Roy estre affoibly de la tierce partie." Tom. i., p. 109.

[42] Duclercq, tom. iv., p. 205.—Commines, tom. i., p. 93.

as had been the commencement. He opened a daily communication with the Count of Charolais. Their messenger was the trusty and sagacious Guillaume Biche—still the servant of Charles, and still regarded with the same high favour by the king. One result followed. The other chiefs, taking umbrage at this private intercourse between the Burgundian leader and the enemy, affected to regard the former as no longer entitled to their confidence, and held councils which he was not invited to attend. But this proceeding did not lead to the explosion that might have been expected. At so critical a moment Charles preserved his self-command. He dissembled his indignation, and assumed in his bearing towards his allies a cordiality foreign to his disposition.[43] He knew that measures now in progress would bring the contest to its final issue—that in a few days the question still in dispute would be decided.

Did not Louis detect the signs of his approaching fate? One portent, at least, was visible. On the night of September 26 the outer gate of the Bastille, one of the entrances into the city from the open fields, was discovered to be unbarred. The cannon were found to have been spiked. The officer in command of the fortress was Philip de Melun, father of Charles de Melun. The town was filled with alarming rumours. The citizens kept watch and ward throughout the night, closed the streets with chains, and refused to disband even at the king's orders.[44] His own anxieties were

[43] "Se mit plus de feste et joyeulx avec ces seigneurs, que paravant, et avec meilleure chiere; et eut plus communications avec eulx et leurs gens, qu'il n'avoit acoustumé; et à mon advis qu'il en estoit grant besoing, et dangier qu'ilz ne se en fussent separez." Commines, tom. i., p. 95.

[44] De Troyes, p. 44.—Commines

doubtless at their highest pitch.—But they were soon to terminate.

The next morning brought intelligence that a party of the confederates had entered Normandy. Pontoise had opened its gates—the commander of the garrison, a king's officer, giving the signal for surrender. A few days later the same scene was enacted at Rouen, the capital, and the residence of Madame de Brezé. It was she indeed—or rather her counsellors, the prelates of the province and the representatives of the great nobility—who had planned this masterly piece of treachery. They had disclosed their scheme to the allies, who, grasping at the offer, had despatched the Duke of Bourbon, with three thousand men, to receive the submission of the province in the name of Charles of France. The other principal towns speedily followed the example of the capital—the inhabitants readily consenting to swear allegiance to the prince and to recognize him as their sovereign.[45]

This last and greatest treason resolved the king's doubts. The struggle in his mind was over. He could not have brought himself to part with Normandy; but now Normandy was lost![46] There was no cause, no time, for further deliberation. His position was no longer tenable. The ground was heaving beneath him. What had happened in Normandy might happen tomorrow in Paris. Even in Paris he was surrounded by Normans: the troops whose fidelity was his sole de-

(who was long afterwards informed of these circumstances by Louis himself), tom. i., p. 87.

[45] Basin, *tom.* ii., p. 126.—Commines, tom. i., pp. 97, 98.—De Troyes, p. 145.

[46] "Disant que de son consentement n'eust jamais baillé tel partaige à son frere; mais puisque d'eulx mesmes les Normans en avoient faict ceste nouvelleté, il en estoit content." Commines, tom. i., p. 99.

pendence were the compatriots of those who had just betrayed his cause and chosen a sovereign for themselves. It only remained for Louis to ratify their choice.

He sought another interview with the Count of Charolais, in which he announced to him what had taken place and his own determination to abide by it. "Since the Normans," he said, "wish for a duke, they shall have one." It seemed that he was well pleased to have had the decision of the matter taken out of his hands. Never had he expressed himself with greater frankness and vivacity; never had he said so many flattering things.[47] He was eager to consummate the business, and, as a pledge of his sincerity, insisted on placing in Charles's hands the castle of Vincennes—which, though surrounded by the forces of the confederates, had never been captured by them—to be held until the treaty should be executed.

The place of meeting, on this occasion, was in the open fields between Conflans and Paris. Louis had come thither escorted by a hundred archers of the Scottish guard, while the count was attended by a still larger body of followers—most of them, however, merely attracted to the spot by curiosity. Causing his men to halt, Charles hastened to join the king, who turned back on the road by which he had come, and, as usual when engaged in conversation, walked onwards at a rapid pace. No wonder that his companion, listening to the gratifying announcement of his own triumph from the mouth of his vanquished foe, took little notice of the lapse

[47] "M'a dit icelluy monseigneur le roy beaucoup de belles parolles," wrote Charles on the same day (Oct. 3) to his father. Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii., pp. 391-393.

of time or the direction in which he was going, until he found himself, to his surprise, within the palisades of an outwork that formed part of the defences of the city. Five or six persons of his suite had followed him at a little distance. With these exceptions he was surrounded only by troops in the uniform of the king. No hostages had been given for him; neither had he asked for or received any safe-conduct. He was thus in the power of an enemy whose reputation for perfidy was almost unexampled; and the suspicion flashed upon his mind that his situation was not the result of mere accident. But this was not the moment to evince a sense of danger. Without any change of countenance, therefore, he continued the conversation. Perhaps Louis was not displeased to have this opportunity of giving a proof of his good faith and of the sincerity of the intentions which he had just avowed. He called for wine; and the attendant who served him was about to offer the same refreshment to the Count of Charolais. But the king made a gesture for him to desist. "My cousin," he said, with a smile, "drinks no wine between meals."[48] In this delicate manner he saved Charles from an embarrassment which, in that age, the circumstances would have fully warranted.

In the mean time the Burgundian camp was in a ferment of alarm. Nothing less was apprehended than an instantaneous attack—an attempt to surprise the army in the absence of its leader, who had been decoyed into an ambuscade. The chiefs assembled for consultation; the stragglers were called in; the troops were ordered under arms. A murmuring debate arose, in

[48] "Ne versez pas, mon beau cousin ne boit pas entre deux repas." Haynin, tom. i., p. 50.

which conjectures as to what had happened were mingled with recollections of the darkest story in the annals of the Burgundian house—the bloody tragedy of Montereau. Those who had gone with Charles to the place of meeting were vehemently censured for having lost sight of him. The Marshal of Burgundy, an old and trusted servant of the duke, suffered the greatest share of anxiety, for it was he who must give an account to Philip of what had befallen his son. The veteran's feelings alternated between fears for the count's safety and indignation at his imprudence. "If this mad young prince," he exclaimed, "has gone wilfully to his own destruction, it is for us to take care that his folly shall not involve the loss of his father's army and the downfall of his house. Let us take order for securing our retreat to the marches of Burgundy or of Hainault." While he thus talked of leaving Charles to his fate, he mounted his horse, and, accompanied by Saint-Pol, rode off in the direction of Paris, impatient to gather tidings from the scouts. A troop of horse appeared in the distance; it was a party of the royal guards sent by Louis to escort the count on his return. The marshal hastened towards him, with a reproof ready on his lips, and was somewhat disappointed when Charles, who respected the privileges of his mentor, met him with a prompt acknowledgment of his error.[49]

The war was now ended, and it only remained to apportion the spoils among the victors. By a separate

[49] Commines, tom. i., pp. 99-103.—The instances are not rare in which the character of Louis suffered from the hasty and unjust suspicions of those who were little gifted with discernment. An act of flagrant treachery—where the risk was great, the advantage doubtful—was not in his line. If capable of the *crime*, he was at leas incapable of the *fault*.

treaty with the Count of Charolais, signed at Conflans, October 5, the king resigned possession of the towns on the Somme, stipulating for their restoration, after Charles's death, on the payment to his successors of two hundred thousand crowns. This limitation, however, did not extend to the seigniories of Roye, Péronne, and Montdidier, which, with the counties of Boulogne and Guines, were settled upon Charles and his heirs in perpetuity.

Several weeks were still to elapse before the claims of the other leaders could be properly adjusted. An infinite number of grants of lordships and immunities were to be drawn up, scrutinised, and sealed. There was a general scramble for pensions, in which not only the princes and nobles, but in some instances their wives, and even their mistresses, took part. Even at the last there were not a few who thought they had cause for dissatisfaction. Yet the king refused nothing. It was only his own adherents who had reason to accuse him of unfairness. The persons among whom had been divided the confiscated estates of Dammartin and others in disgrace were now called upon for restitution. The Count of Eu was obliged to part with certain of his seignorial rights in Normandy. The Count of Maine, on the other hand, presented a bill for the services which he had rendered the king in the negotiations before described; and, as his account was approved by the confederates, the king could do no less than pay it.[50]

[50] "Au regard de mondit Seigneur du Maine, pource aussi qu'il s'est employé à ladite pacification, . . . le Roy sera tenu de le recompenser, et luy donner et bailler pour icelle recompense la Terre et Seigneurie de Taillebourg, laquelle le Roy fera delivrer à mondit Seigneur du Maine, et recompenser ceux à qui elle appartient." Lenglet, tom. ii., p. 517.

Feudalism had triumphed; the reaction was complete. What efforts it had cost Louis to regain possession of the towns of Picardy! And now he ceded them back without even asking restitution of the four hundred thousand crowns which he had paid for them! His money and his pains had alike been wasted. Yet what was this loss compared with that of Normandy? When the treaty was laid before the Parliament, that body refused to register it. The jurists declared that domains so vast could not be legally alienated from the crown. A royal order was necessary to enforce compliance with the usual forms.[51]

One matter alone was overlooked—that which had been the original and ostensible pretext for the war—the reduction of the taxes, the reform of the government. We are wrong: an article was duly framed setting forth the necessity of devising means for the restoration of the "public weal," and providing for the appointment of thirty-six "notables," who were to meet and devise means accordingly. "I did often inquire," says an honest chronicler, "who these thirty-

[51] The treaties of Conflans and Saint-Maur des Fossés, with various documents relating to them, are printed in Lenglet, tom. ii., p. 499, et seq. See also the "Piéces de comptabilité," exhibiting the enormous increase in the annual expenses of the state after the war, in the Doc. Inéd., Mélanges tom. ii., pp. 459-470.

A few items, in addition to such as are noticed in the text, will convey some notion of the extent to which the spoliations were carried. The Duke of Calabria, besides the grant of several lordships, was to receive a hundred thousand crowns down, and pay for five hundred lances for six months, to be employed in the conquest of Naples, to facilitate which the king engaged to renounce his alliance with the Aragonese house, and to re-establish the Pragmatic Sanction! To the Duke of Bourbon were assigned a hundred thousand crowns and the government of Guienne; to the Duke of Nemours, the government of Paris and the Isle of France; to the Duke of Brittany, the grant of several arrière-fiefs in that province, with a full renunciation of the royal claim to levy aids, a pension for the Duke's mistress, &c. &c.

six notable persons were; but who was the first or who was the last of them I was never able to learn."[52]

While the world wondered at his abasement, Louis himself had too much humility to be conscious of his humiliation. Vivacious and self-possessed as ever, he watched with curiosity, not unmingled with amusement, the manner in which the booty of which he had been despoiled was divided and appropriated by the captors. He freely admitted his inability to contend with enemies so redoubtable—with a politician like his fair brother of Bourbon, with an invincible warrior like his fair brother of Charolais.[53] What he now desired was to gain the friendship of these powerful princes. Mounted on his little hackney, and more "honourably" dressed than was his wont, he every day visited the camp, assisted in reviewing the troops, conversed with the different chiefs, and was especially attentive to those who, on account of former slights, owed him a personal grudge. But it was for Charles that he reserved the loudest and warmest professions of his regard. He fully acknowledged his ingratitude to the house of Burgundy, and the error he had committed in connecting himself with

[52] "J'en ay assez inquis, et ne sceu oncques qui estoyent les trente-six, ne qui estoit le premier, ne le dernier: et à mon jugement, le Roy se monstra le plus subtil de tous les autres Princes." Lamarche, tom. ii., p. 249.

Honest Oliver, however, who is seldom very exact, had failed to make inquiries in the proper quarter. The thirty-six commissioners were duly appointed; but, as their deliberations led to no material result, the nation, it seems, soon became oblivious of their names.

[53] "En après ledit accord fait et passé par aucuns biens preciez au Roy, fut demandé audit Roy, qui le avoit meu de faire tel Traité à son préjudice. Et le Roy respondit en cette maniere, ce a esté en consideration de jeunesse de mon frere de Berry; la prudence de beau cousin de Calabre; le sens de beau frere de Bourbon; la malice du Comte d'Armignac; l'orgueil grand de beau cousin de Bretagne; et la puissance invincible de beau frere de Charolois." Lenglet, tom. ii., p. 500.

the Croys. They were now living in Paris under his protection; but he protested that he would not countenance them in opposition to their master's son. From this day, he declared, there was no man on whose loyalty he should repose such entire confidence as on that of the Count of Charolais.[54]

It was impossible not to be touched by confessions so penitent, by a confidence so frank. "Gentlemen," said Charles to his officers, in the presence of Louis, "you and I belong to the king our sovereign lord, and are bound to serve him whenever he shall need us."[55]

At length the arrangements were concluded, the treaties signed. On the 30th of October Louis rode to the castle of Vincennes, to complete the forms by which his vassals were to be invested with their new dignities and possessions, and to bid them farewell. Charles of France did homage for Normandy; the Count of Charolais, for the towns and seigniories in Picardy; the Count of Saint-Pol took the oaths as constable, and received the sword which was the emblem of his office. Then all took their leave of the king. The Duke of Brittany set out for Normandy, taking with him the new duke, whose reign was to be inaugurated under his protection.

[54] "Le roy dit qu'il ayme mieulx mondit seigneur mon maistre que personne qui -vive, et qu'il a plus de fiance en luy et en sa ferme loyauté que en tous les princes du monde; et dit de luy, de son bon sens et de sa bonne volonté tant de biens et d'honneur, qu'il n'est pas à croire; . . . et dit le roy: Par la Pasques Dieu! quand tout le monde luy courroit sus, il se vendra rendre ès mains de mondit seigneur, et congnoist plainement qu'il ne s'est pas conduit envers luy par cy-devans comme il devoit; mais il fera tant cy-après qu'il reparera les faultes passés." Letter of Jean Gros, secretary of the Count of Charolais, October 15, Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii., p. 397.

[55] "Messeigneurs, vous et moy sommes au Roy mon souverain Seigneur qui cy est present, pour le servir toutes les fois que mestier en aura. De Troyes, Lenglet, tom. iv., p. 49.

The Armagnacs, the Duke of Calabria, and the other leaders, departed to their respective homes. The Count of Charolais was the last to be dismissed. Louis accompanied him on the first day's march. He had thought of a mode by which their reconciliation might be cemented, their friendship perpetuated, their interests identified. Within the last few weeks Charles had received tidings of the death of his wife, Isabella of Bourbon. By way of consolation the king offered him the hand of his own daughter, the infant Princess Anne. The province of Champagne was to form a portion of her dowry. A treaty to this effect was drawn up and signed at Villiers-le-Bel.[56]

The parting was now over. The tide which had overwhelmed Louis had rolled away, leaving him still a king, but stripped and desolate as never king had been before. Such, then, was the result of his strenuous toils, his plots and devices, his efforts to emancipate the crown, to consolidate the monarchy, to render his own authority supreme and absolute. Was he, then, disheartened? He had received a lesson, and was diligently pondering its application.

[56] Commines, tom. i., pp. 104–106.—Haynin, tom. i., p. 54.—Duclercq, tom. iv., p. 237.—Lamarche, tom. ii., p. 249.—Lenglet, tom. ii., p. 543.

CHAPTER VII.

LIÉGE. — ITS HISTORY AND INSTITUTIONS. — REVOLUTION UNDER LOUIS OF BOURBON. — THE "PITEOUS PEACE."

1466.

THE ardour of the Burgundian cavaliers was in no degree diminished by their late exploits and the triumph that had crowned their arms. They eagerly turned their steps towards a new field of enterprise. They had humbled the King of France; they were now going to chastise the "villain people of Liége."[1] Their indefatigable leader allowed them but a brief season for repose. Charles himself did not even deviate from the direct route to visit his father at Brussels. He traversed Champagne, Hainault, and the southern part of Brabant, gathering fresh levies as he advanced, and towards the close of December entered the enemy's territory at the head of a larger force than had ever before been marshalled under the standard of his house.

The principality of Liége, embracing a somewhat more extended territory than the present province of the same name, belonged to that portion of Belgium which, though classed among the "Low Countries," was geographically a region quite distinct from them. For here the great alluvial basin terminates, and the first step is gained of that ascent which, continuing from

[1] "Quant nous aurons fait icy," wrote Charles's secretary, Oct. 15, "nous irons commencer de plus belle contre ces villains Liégois." Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii., p. 398.

ridge to ridge, from mountain chain to mountain chain, culminates at last in the pinnacles of the Alps. Instead, therefore, of a dreary uniformity of sandy downs, marshes, or moorland wastes, which formed the natural features of the northern and central districts, Liége presents a surface remarkably diversified and picturesque. Its ranges of wild and rugged hills, intersected by deep ravines and leaping rivulets, and its vast forest tracts—outlying domains of the ancient woodland monarchy of Ardennes, where Saint Hubert's shrine still wears its sylvan trophies, and his votaries pursue their quest of the roebuck and the wild boar—are finely contrasted with the softer features of the scenery, the valleys and gentler undulations, gay with a luxuriant vegetation. Through its whole extent the country is threaded by a noble river,—the Meuse,—which, lower down, must creep with the joyless current of age along the flats of Holland, but which here exhibits the beauty, vigour, and romance of youth. Sometimes it shoots swiftly past gigantic limestone cliffs, that rise precipitously from the water's edge, here overhanging the stream in broad masses or crags of fantastic shape, there crowning themselves with lofty and isolated peaks; and sometimes it lingers and spreads itself towards gently receding slopes, wearing a verdure of peculiar brilliancy, which, still rising and still retreating, gain at last a range of heights that encompass and command a panoramic view.

It was not, however, to the beauties of the surface, but to the treasures beneath it, that Liége was indebted for its early fame and importance. The soil is rich in many ores, but especially in iron and coal; and from a remote period a swarming and hardy people has been

engaged in the mutually dependent labours of the mine and the forge.[2] The capital,—which gave its name to the principality,—occupying the base and slopes of an amphitheatre of hills that overlook the junction of several tributary streams with the Meuse, is built upon the most extensive coal tract in the province. The miner pursues his explorations under the foundations of the houses. Great foundries have been erected over the mouths of the pits. Numberless furnaces send forth volumes of smoke into the narrow and tortuous

[2] According to the monkish legend, an angel, in the guise of a venerable sage, first revealed to the peasants the existence of the coal, and made them acquainted with its uses and the mode of extracting it. Some writers, however, have suggested that for "angelus" we should read "Anglus"—"ce qui est bien différent," remarks M. Dewez (Hist. de Liége, tom. i. p. 130), having forgotten, apparently, the "Non Angli sed angeli" of Pope Gregory VII., and little anticipating that, a few years later, the industry of Belgium was to receive an extraordinary stimulus from the genius of an Englishman, the projector of that network of railways by which the centres of population established on the line of the coal formation are now connected with each other and with distant capitals and outports. (See the Life of Stephenson.)

If we may credit the narrative of Nicander Nucius (published by the Camden Society), the colliers at Liége, instead of being assisted in their operations by supernatural influence, had to encounter perils of a demoniacal origin. "When they meet with this mineral they form a spacious cavern; but they are not able to throw out the stones [i. e., the coal] immediately, for fire on a sudden bursts forth and encompasses the whole cavern. When the miners are desirous of extracting the coal, they put on a linen garment which has neither been bleached nor dipped in water. This covers the frame from head to foot, leaving only certain apertures for the eyes; . . . they also take a staff in their hands. . . . The miner then draws near to the fire and frightens it with his staff. The fire then flies away and contracts by little and little; having then expended itself, it collects together in a surprising manner, and, becoming very small, remains quite still in a corner. But it behoves the man who wears the linen garment to stand over the flame when at rest, always terrifying it with his staff. Whilst he performs this service the miners extract the stones; but, as soon as they have left the cave, the dormant fire on a sudden bursts forth and environs the whole cave." The writer—a Greek traveller of the sixteenth century—satisfied himself of the reality of these marvels by personal inspection.

streets, and sully with a murky radiance the purity of the evening sky. Smaller towns and villages on every side present a similar aspect; and the traveller, passing by night through the valley of the Meuse, imagines himself traversing a country lighted by volcanic eruptions or by the devastating flames that follow the march of a horde of ruthless invaders.[3]

Liége has a history of its own—as picturesque as its landscapes, as vivacious as its sparkling river, filled with passages of a wild and startling character like the mingled gloom and glare of its night scenery. The most eventful period of that history falls within the scope of the present work. For the details of an earlier period we must refer the reader to the pages of the native chroniclers, transferred from which the narrative would lose not only all its charm, but half its meaning.[4]

Ecclesiastical states — a class of which the papal dominions, the oldest of them all, offer the only existing

[3] Such is the description given by Victor Hugo of the approach to Liége by night: "Quand on a passé le lieu appelé la *Petite-Flemalle*, la chose devient inexprimable et vraiment magnifique. Toute la vallée semble trouée de cratères en éruption. Quelques-uns dégorgent derrière les taillis des tourbillons de vapeur écarlate étoilée d'étincelles; d'autres dessinent lugubrement sur un fond rouge la noire silhouette des villages; ailleurs les flammes apparaissent à travers les crevasses d'un groupe d'édifices. On croirait qu'une armée ennemie vient de traverser le pays, et que vingt bourgs mis à sac vous offrent à la fois dans cette nuit ténébreuse tous les aspects et toutes les phases de l'incendie, ceux-là embrasés, ceux-ci fumants, les autres flamboyants." Le Rhin, tom. i. let. 7.

[4] Few of the earlier chroniclers of Liége have yet found their way into print. Jacques de Hemricourt—whose "Miroir des Nobles de Hesbaye" is probably the finest as well as the best known—was also the author of a valuable treatise, "Li Patron delle Temporaliteit," from which our account of the polity of Liége has been chiefly derived. Among the modern authors to whom we have been indebted are Dewez, Gerlache, Bovy, and especially Polain (who has made many citations from the original sources) and Villenfagne.

specimen—owed their origin, for the most part, to a period when races were emerging from barbarism under the impulse given to all the faculties of man by a newly awakened religious sentiment; when the Church, far from confining herself to the sphere of spiritual guidance and instruction, took the lead in all progressive movements; when forests were cleared and a systematic husbandry was practised and taught by adventurous bands of missionary monks; when the convent or the martyr's shrine gave birth to a town that grew and flourished under the guardianship of its tutelary saint.

Such was the origin of Liége. The Church became early enamoured of these wild hills and lovely valleys, and took them under her own protection. Numerous convents—oases of civilization in the midst of a world of barbarism—were planted in the lonely depths of the Ardennes. The capital owed its existence to the tomb of Saint Lambert, visited at first by crowds of pilgrims, and in time surrounded by a fixed population, which found in the ægis of the sanctuary and in the resources of the soil the means of social enfranchisement, the elements of material prosperity, and the basis of political rights. The modest chapel that enshrined the saint's remains grew into a noble temple. Liége became the head of a bishopric. The chapter of Saint Lambert's, represented by the bishop, was the "natural lord"—to use the expressive phrase of feudal times—of the land and the inhabitants; and, by successive imperial grants, it added to its original domain several counties and seigniories lying on both banks of the Meuse.[5]

[5] The great name in the early history of Liége is that of Notger, or Notker, a bishop of the tenth century, to whom the see was chiefly indebted

Armed with spiritual as well as temporal authority, the government of Liége exercised a certain restraint over the barbarous and warlike chiefs whose grim abodes were perched on all the rocky pinnacles of the country, and whose violent feuds cast a sombre light on the earlier pages of its annals. It was impossible to abolish altogether the right of private war claimed universally by the nobles; but this right was at least subject to restrictions stronger than existed elsewhere. If it was permitted to slay an enemy, it was forbidden to burn his house, to devastate his fields, or to exterminate his family. The bishop could proclaim a truce of forty days. If the truce were infringed, or the limits of allowed barbarity exceeded, those who had cause of complaint appeared before the episcopal palace, struck upon a massive brazen ring suspended at the portal, and, the summons being answered, announced the acts of violence that had been committed, and requested that "my lord of Liége" would appoint a day to sit in his "Tribunal of the Peace." Before this tribunal the

for its temporal aggrandizement. By his skill in diplomacy he was enabled to obtain great concessions from the emperor, while his mingled craft and boldness made him the terror of the lawless nobles, whom he succeeded in reducing to complete subjection. One of his most powerful vassals, Radus des Prez, whose castle occupied the summit of a hill overlooking the capital, was invited to accompany Notger on a visit to the imperial court. When they were approaching Liége, on their return, Radus suddenly drew rein, rubbed his eyes, and then remained mute with astonishment. "What is amiss, fair cousin?" inquired the bishop, with a demure, sidelong glance at his companion. "By my faith, Sir Bishop," exclaimed the amazed baron, "I know not whether I am awake or dreaming. Methought a castle of mine stood on yonder height; but now I see there not a castle, but a church." "Be not troubled, fair cousin," replied Notger; "it is true that by my orders your castle has been demolished, and a church erected in its place. But what of that? My cousin Robert has a fair lordship beyond the Meuse, which he shall bestow upon you as an indemnity."

most powerful offender, when summoned, dared not fail to appear; for among the penalties he would incur was one from which there was no escape and against which there was no defence—the dreaded sentence of excommunication.

Long before the period of our history, however, these fires of feudal warfare had burned themselves out. There was now no part of Europe where the privileges of the nobles were so scanty, their power so weakened, their haughty spirit so completely broken. Placed between a government that invoked against them the terrors of religion and a people inflamed by the pursuit of freedom, they had found it impossible to maintain their independence of the one or their dominion over the other. The chapter and the people had made common cause against them; and the long struggle had terminated in the beginning of the fourteenth century, when, after a murderous conflict waged at night in the steep and narrow streets of the capital, illumined by the fitful glare of torches, the infuriated populace set fire to a church in which more than three hundred patricians, the survivors of their party, had taken refuge, and thrust back their victims into the flames as often as they endeavoured to escape, until all were crushed beneath the ruins.[6]

Thus there existed at Liége in the fifteenth century a state of things quite peculiar in the history of that period. The nobles—elsewhere the predominant class—were gone, or reduced to impotence. The aristocratical element might be said to have disappeared from

[6] A spirited account of the "Mal Saint-Martin," as this event was called from the date of its occurrence, is given by Polain in his Récits historiques, pp. 95–125.

the political system. For we find here few traces of that burgher aristocracy—the enjoyment of exclusive privileges by the wealthier classes and great corporations, and the monopoly of the municipal government in the hands of a few—which generally characterized the communes of Flanders as well as those of Germany. On the contrary, a complete, an almost startling, equality existed. The smaller guilds had an equal voice with the greater. The artisan was on a level with the merchant and the capitalist. The apprentice voted as well as the master. The municipal government was renewed yearly, and all native-born or naturalized citizens above the age of fifteen had the right of suffrage and were eligible to office.

What may, perhaps, be considered as still more remarkable was the development of the principles of constitutional government exhibited in the general institutions of the country. The bishop—elected by the chapter or nominated by the pope—exercised powers which were strictly defined and limited. The quintessence of the constitution was expressed in a single sentence: "A prince of Liége makes no change in the laws without the consent of the estates, and administers justice only by the regular tribunals." The decrees of the sovereign were countersigned by responsible ministers. When his prerogatives conflicted with the popular franchises, the question was submitted to the *échevins*, or superior judges, who gave their opinions after consulting the various charters which formed the basis of the political system, and which were therefore in no danger of becoming obsolete. A permanent committee of the three orders—called, from the number of its members, "the Twenty-two"—watched over the con-

duct of the executive and the administration of the laws, and received an appeal from the meanest citizen who felt himself aggrieved. Hence a proverbial saying —to which there is a corresponding phrase in English— "The poor man in his own house is king."

A constitution so closely resembling the present idea of a perfect political system has naturally attracted admiration from those who in recent times have examined its features. But writers of a former period, familiar with its actual workings, have left not a single word in praise of it. It wanted the one element which was wanting in all the constitutions of the Middle Ages —stability. Nowhere, in those ages, do we find a government exercising its prerogatives and a people exercising its franchises in that spirit of mutual forbearance and of self-restraint without which no safeguards or restrictions have any vital force. The different powers of the state were always in conflict. No sacrifices were willingly made to avert a collision; no reliance was placed upon a dormant strength. In general, the first appeal was to the *ultima ratio*; and civil war might almost be considered as the normal condition of society.

Moreover, in the principality of Liége, the constitution, whatever might be its theoretical excellence, was practically set aside by the vast privileges and democratic organisation of the communes. Here, in a greater degree than even in other parts of Belgium, the towns absorbed all the nutritive elements of the body politic. The Estates, enfeebled by the virtual extinction of the nobility, ceased to exercise any influence and to hold the balance of power when disputes had arisen between the prince and the people. Frequent elections, the

struggles of parties, the manœuvres of rival demagogues, and the turbulent spirit of the masses, kept the capital, and to a less extent the other principal towns, in a state of perpetual agitation.[7]

Yet sweet is the air of freedom, even in its storms. Liége, in the middle of the fifteenth century, was one of the most thriving cities in Europe. The number of its inhabitants was reckoned at over a hundred and twenty thousand. Its workshops resounded with the clang of labour. Its streets were filled with the bustle of trade. It had commercial treaties not only with the towns on the Rhine, but with distant countries. As

[7] "Tout chu avient," says Hemricourt, after describing the frequent convulsions to which the country was subject, "par ly movais et indiscreit regiment del citeit de Liege, ... laqueil citeit est case de tous les mals avenus en pays a mon temps, et par quattre poincts tant seulement quy sieroient legiers a remedier si ly comon peuple nastoit sy fort obstineis et aveuleis." The four points which he enumerates are, 1st. The excessive size of the council, composed of more than two hundred persons, where twenty would regulate the affairs of the city far more efficiently—"car multitude engendre confusion." 2d. The equal voice granted to the smallest and least important guild with the greatest, when all were assembled to vote upon a question submitted by the council for the decision of the people. 3d. The concession of the suffrage to the meanest class of the inhabitants, and even to those who were not of an age, or in a position, to manage their own private affairs;—"Ly garchons servants et ly apprendiches ont aultretant de voix en le syette faisant, comme ont ly maistres et ly chief dosteit." 4th. The practice of admitting foreigners who took up their residence at Liége to the rights of citizenship.

Hemricourt, however, wished to see established, in place of this system, a purely theocratic government by the Church. "Would to God," he exclaims, "that the people would consent to yield that reverence which reason teaches is their due to the venerable clergy, adorned with all the faculties of science! The Church is the fountain from which we imbibe knowledge, the pasture on which we are fed even as sheep, the mother to whom we have recourse in all our distresses." And he reminds his countrymen that they are indebted to the clergy, not only for spiritual food, but also in a great measure for the supply of their temporal wants—the larger portion of the land being held in mortmain. Li Patron delle Temporaliteit, printed by Polain at the end of the second volume of his Hist. de Liége.

the privileges of citizenship were granted to foreigners on easy terms, Liége, contrary to what was usual at this period, received a constant infusion of new blood —enjoyed, as it were, a perpetual renovation.[8]

Yet the city had not lost the stamp of its sacred origin. It was still "the daughter of Rome," renowned for the number and the beauty of its churches, and for the pomp with which the sacred offices were daily performed within its walls.[9] The cathedral—dedicated to the saint whose blood had sanctified its site—was regarded with especial pride as the nucleus of the city and the most splendid of its monuments. Its vast cloisters had afforded an asylum to numberless fugitives from feudal tyranny. Its richly decorated shrines were the repositories of a costly treasure accumulated by the pious offerings of many generations. Its canons, sixty in number—called, from their vested rights as sovereign proprietors of the soil, *chanoines tréfonciers*—were all persons of illustrious birth, and many of them of royal descent.[10] Above the high altar was suspended the consecrated standard of Saint Lambert, which, on the outbreak of hostilities with a foreign power, was carried by the clergy in solemn procession to the door of the church, unfurled in the presence of the people, and delivered to the commander of the forces, who, mounted on a milk-white charger, and

[8] "Nos prendons," complains Hemricourt, "afforains borgois sans nombre et les volons affranchier." It is throwing pearls, he says, before swine.

[9] Guicciardini, Belgicæ Descriptio, p. 497.—Excerpta ex Commentariis Jacobi Piccolominei, De Ram, Analecta Leodiensia, p. 382.—Commines, tom. i. p. 196.

[10] In the year 1145 the chapter was composed of "nine sons of kings, fourteen sons of dukes, thirty sons of counts, and seven sons of barons." The list of names is given in Haynin, tom. ii. pp. 148–151. Similar lists are mentioned by Ernst, Lavallaye, &c.

surrounded by a troop of knights, received the precious charge, and swore to surrender it only with his life.[11]

At a little distance from the cathedral was the *Violet*, or city hall, where the burgomasters and council assembled for deliberation, and from which, in times of excitement, the party leaders harangued the populace assembled in the square below. In the centre of the square, on a pedestal of several steps, stood a pillar of gilded bronze—its top representing a pineapple surmounted by a cross. The *Perron*—regarded as an emblem of the civic organisation crowned with spiritual sovereignty—was an object of patriotic reverence and affection. In front of it were read the ordinances issued by the magistrates, as well as the decrees fulminated by the people in general assembly when their privileges were endangered or had been violated. On these occasions the tocsin was rung; the deans of the guilds hastened with their respective banners to the Marché, and planted them beside the Perron; the people followed, pouring from forge, workshop, and factory, until the square was filled with grimed and athletic figures, and the confused shouts of the multitude echoed through the vaulted cloisters of Saint Lambert's, and rose like the murmurs of an angry sea around its lofty spires.

What means, on the other hand, had the government of enforcing its will or resisting the action of the people? It had, of course, no regular army in its pay, and its feudal vassals were scanty in number and impoverished. Nevertheless there were at its command

[11] Villenfagne, Recherches sur l'Hist. de Liége, tom. i. p. 428.

two powerful engines of oppression or defence. In the first place, the bishop was the "fountain of law." The *échevins*, or judges, assembled only on the summons and sat only in the presence of his officer, the grand-mayor. At the command of the bishop, the mayor lowered his wand of office—the law was suspended. The municipal magistrates might still administer justice in civil suits between the burghers. But there was no longer any court for the trial of offences against life or property, any power to punish crime or even to arrest the criminal. The elementary principles of an organised society were in abeyance.[12]

[12] It may be thought that tribunals improvised by the people would have taken the place of those which had ceased to act. But this is to mistake the character of the Middle Ages, when constant turbulence and a frequent resort to force were united with a punctilious regard for legal technicalities. Oppression and revolt were necessary alternations where there was nothing to preserve the equilibrium. Within certain limits insurrection for the purpose of restoring a violated compact was a right, sometimes—as in Castille and in Brabant—expressly recognised by charters, always implied by the very nature of the feudal tie. In Liége it was provided that the people, when "in debate" or at open war with the prince, might elect a *mambour*, or guardian, who was to assume the reins of government with the specific object of protecting the country against invasion—from becoming, through its internal dissensions, the prey of a foreign enemy. But for this regent to have created any office or made any appointment in connection with the administration of justice would have been a gross usurpation of the prerogatives of the prince. Violence, of course, was met by violence. The individual might defend himself; the people might wreak vengeance on a traitor. But such proceedings were felt to be lawless and anarchical. Could the regular judges have been compelled to execute the law, their decrees would doubtless have been considered valid, just as the sacraments of the Church celebrated by a priest under compulsion retained all their efficacy. But a sentence passed or executed by officers irregularly appointed would have had as little virtue, so far as the public conscience was concerned, as a mass performed by a layman. The remarks of Hemricourt on the election and functions of the *mambour* indicate the limits of what may be termed a legal revolt. "Se le pays at debat ou werre overte a son saingnor, les bonnes vilhes avecque le remanant de pays puelent bin, de greit et conseilh de capitle sil remane avecque eauz, ou sains ledit

But the chief strength of the government was derived from the sacred attributes of the prince. When his temporal authority had been resisted he had recourse to his spiritual functions. He issued an interdict suspending the celebration of all religious rites. The blight of an awful curse then fell upon the contumacious people. The bells, that with cheerful *carillons* had proclaimed from every spire the passage of the hours, each linked with its appropriate act or feeling of devotion, were silenced. The churches—ever open, not only to the throng that attended at stated periods, but to the solitary worshipper who stepped aside from the bustle of the world to pray and meditate amid the sculptured symbols of his faith—were closed. The chancel no longer echoed the swelling chant of the priest; the confessional no longer received the whisper of the penitent. There was no baptism for the infant, no sacramental marriage for the betrothed, no unction for the dying, no Christian burial for the dead.

Thus physical force was balanced by moral fear. On the one side was a government that maintained itself in the exercise of its authority by the spiritual weapons at its command; on the other, a people accustomed to shrink with dread before the censures of the Church, yet accustomed also to struggle pertinaciously with

capitle, sil est avecque le saingnor, faire et enlire un capitaine et un conduiseur, appelleis a chu barons chevaliers et escuwyers de pays, et par leur accorde et conseilh, qui en tos estats de werre les governeroit et conduroit, et alqueil ilz aroyent recours comme a leur soverain en cely cas; nequident che capitaine ou mambor, se mambor le voloyent appelleir, ne poroit estre tant previlegiet de capitle ne de remanant de tout le pays, tant quil y awist eveske, quil powist mettre nul offichien ne donneir nul offiche al loy appartenant, car rien ne poroit faire encontre le saingnor en cely cas ne en nul aultre tochant le loy, se ce nestoit violeement et de forche, liqueille violenche ly loy ne puet consentir." Li Patron delle Temporaliteit.

the power by which these censures were wielded and put in force.

Had no extraneous influences interfered with the adjustment of this balance, the oscillations would in time have become less violent. But Liége belonged to a group of petty states, each originally independent of the others, but exposed by its weakness and its situation to foreign interference. The beginning of the fifteenth century was an important epoch in the history of the Netherlands. The house of Burgundy, having rooted itself there—having acquired by marriage Flanders and Artois—extended its sway over the other provinces, gaining one by conquest, another by purchase, a third by descent—a contingency skilfully prepared for by the alliances which it had formed—until the geographical integrity of its dominions in this quarter was broken only by the independence of a single state. The peculiar character of its institutions saved Liége from the fate of the neighbouring territories. The government was not hereditary, and could not therefore pass by succession to a foreign prince. It was an ecclesiastical domain, and could not therefore be ruled by a layman. Its conquest and secularization were forbidden by the law of Christendom, by the inviolable sanctity of every right on which the Church had placed its seal.

Yet it mattered little for Liége that it might not be devoured by the monster that lay coiled around it, since it was at least certain to be strangled by the folds. It first awakened to a partial consciousness of its new position in the year 1408, when the bishop, John of Bavaria, being "in debate" with his people, appealed for assistance to his kinsman John the Fearless, Duke

of Burgundy. This was at the moment when the latter prince, having collected an army, had entered France to justify the murder of Louis of Orleans and to assert his claims to the regency. The occasion was an opportune one for making a display of his power. He returned for a brief period to the Netherlands, mustered all his forces, and, entering the territory of Liége, was encountered on the plains of Othée by the militia of the towns, numerous, indeed, and brave, but accustomed only to the irregular warfare of border forays, and wholly ignorant of military operations on a larger scale. A letter is still extant, written by the duke himself two days after the battle, in which he vaunts the slaughter of "twenty-five or twenty-six thousand" undisciplined and indifferently armed men, but "as courageous and enduring as any that were ever seen," his own loss amounting to "between sixty and fourscore knights and squires," and the whole time occupied by the conflict being an hour and a half.[13] This defeat of the people of Liége was followed by their immediate submission. They made a treaty which, besides other degrading conditions, bound them to the payment of an enormous fine to the victor. The bishop returned to his capital, and earned for himself, by the barbarity with which he punished the revolt, a cognomen even more distinctive and emphatic than that of his ally. He is known in history as "John the Pitiless."

During a long period that followed, while France was desolated by a civil war first kindled by the ambition of the house of Burgundy, the possessions of that house were greatly enlarged, and its power rapidly

[13] Lettre de Jean, Duc de Bourgogne, à Antoine, Duc de Brabant, son frère, Gachard, Analectes Belgiques, pp. 2-6.

increased. Yet this seemed rather the effect of a natural law of aggrandisement than of a thirst for conquest. Philip the Good availed himself of such opportunities as offered for enlarging the circle of his dominions; but he was not driven by a restless ambition to engage in continual wars. Liége forgot the stern lesson it had received; it continued to have "debates" with its bishop and predatory wars with its neighbours, heedless of the provocation it thus gave to the most potent prince in Christendom.

Gradually, however, almost insensibly, its energies were becoming paralysed. The union of the Netherlands under a single head gave a fresh stimulus to their industry and widened the avenues of their commerce. From these advantages Liége was excluded. It was forced to compete with rivals who were better protected than itself, and who enjoyed greater facilities in seeking a market for their productions. It lay in the shadow while brighter rays of prosperity had fallen upon them.

Politically, too, its condition had changed. The people might maintain its privileges, but the prince had lost his independence. If Philip could not himself mount the episcopal throne and add to his other titles that of Bishop of Liége, he could at least, by his influence with the pope, obtain the appointment for one of his favourites or for a member of his family. Virtually the see had become a benefice at his disposal.

In 1456, having extorted the resignation of the reigning bishop, John of Heinsberg—whose easy temper and winning manners had rendered him popular with his subjects, but whose excessive partiality for festive, and especially female society, had led him to take up

his residence at the Burgundian court[14]—Philip procured the nomination of his nephew, Louis of Bourbon. At these events the people were struck with stupor. They foresaw the termination of a history which they had been wont to consider glorious. Their prince had become the parasite of a foreign sovereign, and existed only by his sufferance. "It were better," they exclaimed, "that we should all become Burgundians together."[15]

The new bishop was eighteen years of age, and had not yet completed his studies at the University of Louvain. He could not be admitted to holy orders, but he had obtained a papal dispensation enabling him to exercise the temporal functions of his office. Attired in a gay scarlet dress and plumed "Burgundian cap,"

[14] Heinsberg is described by a contemporary chronicler as "ly sangnour qui cent ans devant luy n'avoit eut evesque en chis pays qui fust si gracieux ou si subtilhe de lui en acquerant or et argent a ses bonnes vilhes et ses subjets par honneur . . Il amoit et hantoit amoreusement damoyselles." Like his famous predecessor, Henry of Gueldres, he was the reputed father of more than sixty bastards. (Jean de Stavelot, ap. Polain, Hist. de Liége, tom. ii., p. 274, note.) The last trait deserves notice—not as extraordinary in a prelate (for, though the celibacy of the clergy was the source of many virtues, chastity could not be accounted one of them), but from the fact that, in connection with the bishop's frequent visits to the Burgundian court and his friendship with the duchess, it gave rise to a popular suspicion productive, as will be seen, of direful consequences.

[15] Adrianus de Veteri-Busco, Rerum Leodiensium sub Johanne Heinsbergio et Ludovico Borbonio Episcopis, in Martene et Durand, Amplissima Collectio (Parisiis, 1729), tom. iv. p. 1227.

This collection is rare, and the library of Andover Theological Seminary is fortunate in possessing what is probably the only copy to be found in the United States. Michelet, whose keen insight and fervid imagination are conspicuous in all that relates to Liége, has extracted from the dry, but minute and accurate, work of Adrianus—to the importance of which he was the first to call attention—the chief material for the most brilliant of his episodes. It is to be regretted that the chronicles and documents collected by De Ram appeared too late to be submitted to the same alembic.

and escorted by a troop of Flemish cavaliers, he made his entrance into the capital, was inducted and enthroned. His accession was the commencement of a prolonged struggle between himself and his people, the termination and results of which alone fall within the limits of our subject. On the one hand, Louis of Bourbon—a mere youth, of the most frivolous character, ignorant of his duties, with no capacity for government—provoked the nation by illegal extortions, by absurd commands, and by an open disregard of the popular immunities.[16] No sooner did he encounter opposition than he had recourse to the tremendous powers which even the most arbitrary of his predecessors had appealed to only in the last resort. Quitting the capital, he retired to Huy, a border town, where he plunged into a life of gross sensuality, surrounding himself with creatures who shared and pandered to his appetites, and whence, with the recklessness of imbecility, he sent forth decrees that had the effect of unhinging all the parts of the social fabric.[17]

On the other hand, the people passed through the various stages of revolution. They appealed against the interdict from the bishop to his metropolitan, the Archbishop of Cologne; from the archbishop to the

[16] His proceedings excited, at first, a feeling of surprise among his subjects, which was thus naïvely expressed: "Qu'avons-nous fait si tost a si joeune homme qui nat point passez ung an qu'il est evesque, et il est si indigné contre sa cité et patrie?" (Chronique manuscrite, cited by Polain, tom. ii. p. 285.) According to Adrianus, the financial measures of the bishop were received with derision.

[17] The character of Louis of Bourbon has been leniently treated by some modern writers,—M. de Barante, for example,—taking their cue from the Burgundian authorities. But the chroniclers of Liége, though almost all of them ecclesiastics and far from friendly to the populace, censure the conduct of the bishop with candid severity.

papal legate sent to decide the matter; from the legate to the pope in person; from the "pope ill informed to the pope better informed." The chapter and the wealthier citizens strove to effect an accommodation. Failing in this, they underwent the usual fate of moderate parties in times of political disturbance; they incurred the hatred of the prince, and they lost their influence with the people. A violent faction now obtained the ascendency, having at its head a noble, but a noble who, like all of his class in Liége, could clear a path for his ambition only by descending from his rank, enrolling himself as a member of one of the guilds, and courting the favour of the populace. This person—by name Raes de la Rivière, lord of Heers—possessed in a more than common degree the requisites of the demagogue—fluency of speech, laxity of principle, and audacity that passed for courage. By his skill in swaying the popular assemblies he was enabled to exercise for a time the authority of a dictator. But on this uncertain basis it was impossible to establish any regular government. The country was in a state of anarchy. The sources of its prosperity were dried up. Many thousands of the inhabitants, driven from the towns by poverty or political proscription, wandered about gaining a livelihood by plunder, and at length formed themselves into troops, called "Companions of the Green Tent," because they made their retreat in the forest of Ardennes and were sheltered by its leafy canopies.[18]

[18] The inefficiency of those provisions in the constitution which have been most highly extolled becomes apparent in a situation like the present. Some of the questions in dispute were laid before the *échevins*, who rendered a decision which neither party was willing to accept. The bishop refused to convoke the estates. Not a word is said of the "Twenty-

What seemed singular in all this was that Philip of Burgundy did not interpose at once to reduce the rebellious subjects of his kinsman and *protégé* to submission. Openly he proffered only his mediation. But there could be no doubt as to which of the two parties ought to regard him as a friend, which as an enemy. It was his influence—the influence of a powerful prince, the most devoted son of the Church, the projector of a crusade against the Turks—which had induced the papal court to confirm the interdict and to fulminate its censures against the people. Whenever Louis of Bourbon was entreated by the chapter to adopt a more moderate course, he had but one reply: "His uncle the Duke of Burgundy would maintain him in the possession of his rights."

Isolated, hemmed in on all sides by the dominions of its real though as yet undeclared antagonist, where could Liége look for a protector? It would have been idle for it to appeal to its feudal lord paramount, the Emperor of Germany—in name and rank the first among secular princes, but in actual power one of the least. Nor were the eyes of the people turned in this direction. They had an ally who possessed substantial means to aid them—the head of a nation that belonged to the same race and spoke the same language as themselves; the sovereign, but the jealous and secretly hostile sovereign, of the enemy they had so much cause to dread. Doubtless it was his desire to avoid an open

two," which some English admirers of the institutions of Liége are reported to have pronounced the one thing wanting to the perfection of their own. A foreign nobleman, Mark of Baden, brother of the reigning margrave was elected *mambour*, but held the office as a mere tool of the revolutionary leaders, and deserted the country at the first approach of that peril for which the office had been expressly created.

breach with the King of France that kept Philip so long a quiescent spectator of the quarrel.

The bond of a common origin had been early strengthened by commercial treaties permitting a free interchange of products between France and Liége. Under Charles the Seventh these treaties had been renewed and extended. So strong was the affection entertained for this monarch by his allies, that, when his rebellious son had fled from him and taken up his residence in Brabant, they talked of an expedition for the purpose of seizing the prince and sending him back a prisoner to his father's court. When, therefore, they heard of his accession to the crown, they were not without fears as to the consequences. A deputation, however, was despatched to Paris to congratulate the new monarch and to solicit his friendship. The envoys, much to their surprise, were received with an extreme graciousness. The honour of knighthood was forced on one of their number, a simple burgher, who would fain have declined it. In the warmth of their gratitude they besought Louis to become the "protector" of Liége, and to this proposal he readily acceded. The ecclesiastical members of the embassy, representing the bishop and chapter, demurred, on the ground that they had not been empowered to prefer such a request. Louis, however, solved this difficulty by maliciously declaring that his protection should not extend to the bishop and chapter.[19]

In his early attempt to narrow the power of the house of Burgundy, and to cut off the Count of Charolais from

[19] "Unde rex suscepit Leodienses sub sua protectione, exceptis domino et capitulo. Et quidam de familia regis invitavit omnes Leodienses ad prandium, exceptis dominis de capitulo." Adrianus, Ampliss. Col. tom. ii. p. 1249.

the means of thwarting his designs, the politic king had not overlooked the advantages to be derived from a connection with Liége. With Picardy redeemed and placed under the government of Nevers, the bitter enemy of Charles; with Liége standing like an advanced post, a hostile fortress, in the very midst of the Burgundian dominions; with the adjacent provinces in the hands of the Croys, the hated favourites of Philip, the secret agents of the king,—Louis had thought himself secure from any attempt at opposition in a quarter where opposition was most to be dreaded. How the barrier was broken down,—how the Count of Charolais by a strong and sudden effort overturned the Croys, made his own authority in the Netherlands supreme, and headed the whole feudal power of France in resistance to the sovereign,—we have already seen. When the War of the Public Weal broke out the agents of Louis appeared at Liége, distributing money, promising succours, and inviting the towns of the principality to enter into a league with the French monarch as the certain means of securing their own freedom and independence. This occurred at the moment when the revolution had reached its crisis—when the interdict, which, though repeatedly confirmed, had been as often suspended, was to go into effect, in accordance with the terms of a papal bull pronouncing the usual anathemas in case its provisions were not complied with. The chapter, after consultation, made known the impossibility of further evasion or delay. On the other hand, Heers and his followers gave public notice that every priest refusing to "chant" would be thrown into the river.[20] Many ecclesiastics

[20] Protestantism in a latent form has existed in the Roman Catholic Church in all ages and in all countries. A distinction has been instinctively

fled secretly from the city; but they were captured and brought back, and their houses sacked by the mob. On the night of July 5, 1465, few of the inhabitants of the capital retired to rest. Gangs of people patrolled the streets, or stationed themselves in front of the different churches, waiting for the hour at which the bells were always rung for matins. When it arrived the chimes were heard as usual. In the terrible strait to which they were reduced, with souls and bodies equally imperilled, the clergy found a loophole for escape. They continued to discharge their functions "under protest." [21]

Liége was now become a Pariah among states. All the princes of Christendom were invited by the Church to aid in reducing its rebellious vassals; and, what was more significant and of greater importance, the Duke of Burgundy was especially intrusted with the task. That he would speedily obey the summons admitted of

perceived, by the laity at least, between the truth of religious dogmas, or the efficacy of religious rites, and the force of papal decrees. Even Charles V. and Philip II. made war upon popes and disregarded their censures, though either of those monarchs would rather have lost a fortress than have missed a mass. In like manner, the people of Liége were ready to compel the administration of the sacraments, though informed by the head of the Church that they were thereby incurring only a deeper damnation. They believed implicitly in the sacred character of the priesthood, but had a stronger faith in the efficacy of its extorted blessings than in those of its voluntary curses. The real terror of an act of excommunication consisted not in the sentence of eternal perdition, but in the severance of the person condemned from communion with his fellow-Christians and from all the consolations of religion. These were tangible and immediate results, the fear of which can scarcely be considered as superstition.

[21] Adrianus, Ampliss. Col., tom. iv. pp. 1275, 1276. — Johannis de Los Chronicon Rerum Gestarum ab Anno 1455 ad Annum 1514, De Ram, p. 26. — Depositiones Testium mense Junio 1465 factæ, De Ram, pp. 517-522.

little doubt. It was natural, therefore, that Liége should accept without hesitation the alliance offered by the French king. A treaty was signed binding the parties to wage common war against Philip, and to make no peace in which both were not included.[22] No sooner had this treaty been proclaimed at the Perron than the alarm-bell was rung, the guilds assembled, and, displaying their banners, marched out of the city. Crossing the frontiers of Brabant, they began to devastate the country; castles, villages, and even churches were sacked and burned; the inhabitants were put to the sword. Philip's lieutenant, the Count of Nassau, had no difficulty in raising a sufficient force to punish and drive back the undisciplined invaders. But this check had little effect upon the sanguine and reckless spirit of the people. They were, in truth, excited almost to madness. During several years they had lived without the security of law; their industry had been paralyzed; and they were now placed under the awful ban of the church. They regarded the Duke of Burgundy as the author of their calamities; and they imagined that the time had arrived when this prince might be defied with impunity. The earlier tidings brought to the Netherlands of the state of the war in France were of a nature to confirm this impression. According to the version of the battle of Montlhéry given by those who had been the first to fly from the field, the Burgundian army had been routed and the Count of Charolais was a prisoner. These rumours, which were credited even at Brussels, excited boundless

[22] Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii.198, et seq.

exultation in Liége. Hostilities were renewed; and flames and devastation again marked the track of the marauding bands that sallied across the borders.[23]

Such acts as these, however, were not the only or the worst affronts offered to the haughty and powerful house that had cast its shadow over Liége. The inhabitants of one town were guilty of an offence against these princes of a deeper dye than the invasion of their territory or the destruction of their castles. Dinant, second only to the capital in population and importance, was situated at the south-western extremity of the principality, on the right bank of the Meuse, which here formed the boundary line between the territory of Liége and the county of Namur. On the opposite bank, at the distance only of a bowshot, stood Bouvignes, the competitor of Dinant in an important branch of trade and manufacture of which the latter had long been the principal seat. Rivalry in trade, difference of political sympathies and allegiance, their proximity to each other and comparative remoteness from other towns, had engendered a bitter animosity between these two places, although there had been in times past frequent intermarriages between the inhabitants, with a consequent mixture of blood.[24] The feud was kept alive not only by every petty species of mutual annoyance, but by frequent outbreaks of actual hostilities. In the desultory war now raging along the whole frontier, Dinant and Bouvignes took, of course, an active part.

[23] Adrianus de Veteri-Bosco.—Johannis de Los; Henrici de Merica de Cladibus Leodiensium; De Ram, pp. 27, et seq., 145-152.—Duclercq, tom. iv. pp. 194, 195, 210.—Haynin, tom. i. pp. 24, 25, 51, et seq.

[24] Commines, tom. i. p. 115.

No strategy was necessary to bring about an encounter. The heights on either side were crowned with stone towers; and a continual, though probably not very effective, cannonade was interchanged across the river. But there were other modes of warfare, in which the people of both places were much better skilled than in managing artillery or in carrying on a regular siege. They sallied out in bands from either town to surprise and capture the traders of the other whose business led them beyond the walls, or to plant palings in the river to interrupt the passage of boats laden with provisions. The apprentices, who formed a large proportion of the population and who mingled largely in these skirmishes, were accustomed to rely as much upon their powers of ribaldry as on their clubs and other weapons for disconcerting their opponents. On one occasion a troop, composed chiefly, it would seem, of idle youths and such persons as make up the rabble of large towns, crossed the river from Dinant, and, appearing under the walls of Bouvignes, displayed a figure stuffed with hay, having a cow-bell suspended from its neck, and a tattered mantle rudely emblazoned with the cross of Saint Andrew and other insignia of the house of Burgundy. "See," they exclaimed, "your Count of Charolais! a false traitor, and in truth no count at all, but the bastard of our old Bishop Heinsberg foisted on your duke as his son! We are going to hang him here in effigy, as his master, the King of France, whom he dared to attack, has already hung him in person." With these and other insulting cries, — heedlessly uttered, heedfully listened to,—they erected a gibbet, to which they attached the effigy, and, having riddled

it with arrows, left it dangling like a scarecrow in full view of their silent but indignant foes.[25]

While the exultation—the frenzy we may call it—of the people of Liége was at its height, it was suddenly checked by a rumour brought from France, and speedily confirmed. The king had been defeated at Montlhéry; he was besieged in his capital. Other reports followed, still more emphatic and alarming. Louis had been forced to an ignominious peace; the Count of Charolais was returning with his victorious army; he was assembling fresh forces; he was about to march upon Liége. The king himself wrote to his allies, informing them that they were included in the treaty, and advising them to made their submission to the Duke of Burgundy. A falsehood so gross and so easily detected might seem unworthy of a brain like that of Louis; but the case hardly admitted of equivocation; and the plain truth—that even the name of Liége had not been mentioned in the negotiations, except with an apology on his part for having sought the alliance—he was much too amiable to communicate. But the attitude of the enemy was such as to dispel illusion, if any had existed. Consternation prevailed throughout the country; the voices of the demagogues were hushed. The clergy and the moderate party—those whom an old writer calls "the good citizens," because they stayed away from the popular assemblies when there was a probability of a tumult[26]—ventured once more to proffer their

[25] Duclercq, tom. iv. pp. 203, 204.—Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. pp. 221, 222.—Henrici de Merica de Cladibus Leodiensium, De Ram, p. 148.—Chronique manuscrite, ap. Gerlache, Révolutions de Liége sous Louis de Bourbon, p. 63.

[26] "Boni cives absentarunt se a palatio timentes disturbium." Adrianus, Ampliss. Col., tom. iv. p. 1284.

advice. Their proposal was "peace," and the word was echoed by the multitude. Where, a short time before, no man would have dared to mention the existence of Louis of Bourbon, it was now resolved by the people to send a delegation to solicit his forgiveness.[27] At the request of the chapter the interdict was put in force. Two noblemen, vassals both of Burgundy and of Liége, were requested to proceed to Brussels, and, if possible, persuade Philip to grant a truce. They returned without having succeeded in their object, but with permission for an embassy to be sent fully empowered to accept such terms as the duke should think proper to impose. The persons selected belonged to that class which had taken little part in the revolt; those who had been actively concerned in it would probably have been loth to go on such a mission. Arrived at the ducal court, the envoys were not admitted to an audience; but they were furnished with the heads of a treaty such as it was intended to exact. They were informed, however, that nothing could be definitively settled until the Count of Charolais had completed his arrangements and entered the principality. As soon as this had taken place the envoys proceeded to the camp.[28]

They found Charles in the vicinity of Saint-Trond, and their reception by him was more gracious than they had ventured to anticipate. He assigned them lodgings, and supplied them with viands from his own table. He had always, he told them, been well disposed towards

[27] "Ubi paulo ante nullus audebat Ludovicum de Borbon vivere impune confiteri, ibi jam tractabatur," &c. Johannis de Los Chronicon, De Ram, p. 30.

[28] There are some unimportant discrepancies among the authorities in regard to the details and the order of these events.

the people of Liége, and he was prepared, as soon as their present differences were arranged, to be again their friend. He desired them, however, to be present while he reviewed the troops, remarking that, as they had supposed him to have lost his forces in France, he wished at least to show them the remains.[29] The sight was one which might well have convinced them of the folly of resistance. The army consisted of twenty-eight thousand mounted troopers, besides a multitude of archers and other foot.[30] It was an army, too, different in temper from that which, seven months before, the count had conducted into France. It was composed, indeed, in a large proportion of the same troops; but at least these troops had now the experience of a campaign, and in that campaign they had been subjected to a sterner discipline than had ever before been imposed upon his levies by a feudal prince. The exacting disposition, the inexorable will, of their leader had gradually moulded the whole body, and reduced it to more regular habits and a more coherent form. The clamours of discussion and uncalled-for counsel had been silenced. Although large arrears of pay were due, and it was now the depth of winter, the murmurs of the men were few and faint. In passing through Brabant and other Belgian provinces they had been allowed to quarter themselves at pleasure on the inhabitants; but as soon as they entered the territory of

[29] Adrianus, Ampliss. Col., tom. iv.—Johannis de Los, p. 31.

[30] Duclercq, tom. iv. p. 250. The Bohemian tourists, Leo von Rozmital and his followers, who went out to meet Charles on his return, heard the whole number present in the field estimated at a hundred and fifty thousand men—a loose calculation, but not so extravagant as may be thought, the number of camp-followers in a feudal expedition always far exceeding that of the combatants. Ritter-, Hof-, und Pilger-Reise, p. 23.

Liége they were commanded to abstain from plunder and to pay for whatever they consumed. The penalty of disobeying these orders was death. The meanest offender and the highest were punished with equal rigour. When he reviewed the army, any breach of discipline that fell under the notice of the commander caused his dark and violent temper to break forth with terrible strength. At such times he did not hesitate to strike with his baton even men of rank; and, on one occasion, he had slain with his own hand a soldier guilty of some irregularity.[31]

New stipulations having been inserted in the treaty, the envoys returned with it to Liége, and laid it before the people. The public reading gave rise to a long and vehement debate. One clause in particular was met by a storm of opposition. Philip demanded that ten individuals, to be selected by himself, should be given up, to be dealt with according to his pleasure. To the revolutionary faction—at least to its leaders—this was a question of life and death. But the instincts of the great mass of the citizens revolted at an amnesty in which all were not included. Furious invectives were directed against the envoys who had consented to such a treaty. "Traitors! sellers of Christian blood!" —these and similar cries assailed them from every side. The principal member of the embassy, Gilles de Metz, a wealthy and not unpopular man, endeavoured to calm the tumult. He declared that no personal harm would befall those to whom the reservation was intended to apply. A temporary exile was the worst fate to which they would be required to submit. He himself was

[31] Duclercq, tom. iv. pp. 239, 262.

ready to go with them, and never to return to the city unless they returned. This explanation seems to have satisfied a portion of the people without any rigorous inquiry as to the grounds on which it rested. Representatives of other towns were present, and were urgent for the acceptance of the treaty in its present shape. Yet, when it was put to the vote, only eleven out of the thirty-two guilds pronounced in favour of it. In this dilemma, one of the principal nobles, who, like others of his rank, had friendly relations with the court of Burgundy, consented to undertake a mission to the Count of Charolais, and obtain, if possible, some modification of the terms.[32]

In the mean time Charles had advanced somewhat farther into the principality, and spread out his forces over a larger extent of ground. But, while he aimed by threatening demonstrations to overawe the people of Liége, he was not prepared for a slight cause to drive them to desperation. It was not impossible, if he refused to concede the point in question, that his nearer approach would unite them in the determination to brave his power and to make the most resolute defence. The time of year would scarcely have allowed, in such a case, of his undertaking the siege of so strong and populous a town. His troops had begun to suffer from the severity of the weather. Most of them had already remained in the field far beyond the usual term of feudal service. For several weeks they had received no pay; and further to have prolonged the campaign would have been too hazardous a trial of their alle-

[32] Adrianus de Veteri-Bosco, Ampliss. Col., tom. iv

giance and fidelity to a leader whom they had learned to regard with fear but not with love.[33]

Influenced, doubtless, by such considerations as these, Charles agreed to revoke the objectionable clause on condition that the sum of money which had been stipulated to be paid as an indemnification for the ravages committed on his father's territories during the war should be considerably increased. Thus altered, the treaty was one which could only have been dictated by a conqueror and imposed upon a prostrate foe. The magistrates of the capital, ten members of the chapter, ten nobles, ten members of each of the guilds, with similar representatives from each of the other towns, were to appear before the duke at a time and place by him appointed, and, with bare heads and on bended knees, acknowledge that it was without provocation they had declared war against him and attacked his states and subjects — an offence of which they now heartily repented. They were to supplicate his forgiveness, and beseech him to receive them into his grace.[34] The same acknowledgment and supplication were to be made to the Count of Charolais. An indemnity of three hundred and forty thousand florins was to be paid to Philip, and one of a hundred and ninety thousand to Charles. Liége engaged to renounce its present alli-

[33] Haynin, tom. i. p. 61.—"N'y avoit point tant d'amour que de crevecoeur." Duclercq, tom. iv. p. 162.

[34] "Diront que, à tort, sans cause et contre raison, ilz ont commancé et continué ladite guerre; . . . que il leur en desplaist, s'en repentent de tout leur cueur, et que, s'ilz l'avoient à commencer, jamais ne le feroient ou commenceroient, et supplieront en toute humilité . . . que mondit seigneur les vueille prandre et recevoir en sa bonne grace, et leur pardonner leurs offenses." Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. p. 289.

ances with other powers, and to form no alliance in future without the consent and participation of the Duke of Burgundy. He and his successors were to be recognized as the hereditary Protectors of Liége; they were to have at all times a free passage through the principality, whether with or without an army; their coin was to be received there at its current valuation in their own states; no fortresses were to be erected on the Meuse or the Sambre where those rivers formed the boundary of the Burgundian territories. Finally, the vanquished people promised to yield henceforth an unqualified submission to the mandates of their sovereign.[35]

Such were the principal stipulations of a treaty which bears in the registers of Liége the title of the "Piteous Peace." Yet, harsh as were the conditions it imposed, still harsher was the refusal to grant the same conditions to those who had earnestly entreated to be allowed to submit to them. On these terms, so ran the instrument, there shall be perpetual peace between the Duke of Burgundy and all the towns of Liége—*except Dinant.*[36] Dinant was excluded from the treaty—excluded alike from the punishment, the degradation, and the pardon.

The treaty having been ratified, on the 24th of January, 1466, the Count of Charolais prepared to

[35] The treaty is printed at length by Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. p. 285, et seq.

[36] "Par ce moien, bonne paix perpetuelle sera entre mondit seigneur, sesdis pays et subgez, et lesdites cité, villes et pays de Liege et de Looz, . . . et generalement tout le pays, . . . hors mis ceulx de Dinant." Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. p. 296.—It is stated by Adrianus that the people of the capital made the exclusion of Dinant a ground of objection, but were quieted by an assurance that the latter town had rejected offers of peace.

return home. Whatever further enterprise he might meditate, its execution must be deferred to another season. Having ordered all his forces to be mustered for review, he passed along the ranks, thanking each captain and each company in turn for the loyal service they had rendered—expressing his regret that he had not been able to pay them in full, and assuring them that, when again summoned to the field, they should have no cause for complaint. Orders were then given for the army to begin its march. During two successive days the gates of Saint-Trond remained open for the admittance and egress of the different corps. Long trains of baggage-wagons and artillery were followed by bands of archers and other light troops in gay and varied uniforms; and these were succeeded by the men-at-arms, cased in plates of burnished metal and armed with ponderous lances, their horses covered with rich caparisons, with waving plumes and ornaments of gold; while the shrill peals of the clarions and the sterner blasts of the trumpets filled the streets with a continual resonance of martial sounds.[37] The inhabitants of the town beheld this brilliant spectacle with feelings in which fear and hate were blended with admiration. Which sentiment predominated became apparent when only a single company remained in the place. A brawl arose, in which two or three of the soldiers were slain; and an attempt was made by the people to close the gates, with the intention of cutting off and destroying the whole troop. The project, however, failed. One gate was seized by the enemy, who retained possession

[37] "Ne faisoit-on, durant le temps que ledict comte y séjourna, autre chose que bonne chère, jouer, chanter, sonner trompettes et clarions par les rues de ladicte ville, et devant les logis des seigneurs." Haynin, tom. i. p. 59.

of it until a larger force came up, which, sweeping into the town with serried ranks, soon cleared the streets, cutting down such of the citizens as failed to obtain shelter. The place would then have been sacked if the Count of Charolais had not arrived and put a stop to the pillage. He ordered proclamation to be made that the inhabitants should remain within their doors, under pain of death, until the town had been completely evacuated by his troops. He allowed the seizure of a moderate quantity of spoil, made prisoners of some of the persons who had commenced the attack, and finally quitted Saint-Trond on the 30th of January.[38]

It was on the evening of the following day that the citizens of Brussels had notice of his approach. They hastily prepared an ovation with which to welcome his return. The guilds assembled under their respective banners, and marched out, with torches, to receive him. The whole town was illuminated; and his progress through the streets was delayed by the spectacles and quaint performances common on such occasions.[39]

Arrived in front of the palace, Charles dismounted from his horse, and, taking by the hand Leo von Rozmital, a noble Bohemian, then on a visit to the court, ascended the steps. Passing successively through several halls, in each of which was stationed a guard of a hundred men, they entered the apartment where Philip awaited his son. At the door the count knelt. His father, who was seated in state at the upper end of

[38] Duclercq, tom. iv. pp. 251, 252.

[39] "Jam nox adventabat, ideo magna multitudo Duci [i.e., Carolo] obviam, cum facibus accensis, magno ab urbe intervallo effusa est, viaque continenta et nusquam interrumpta per totam civitatem luminum serie, usque in arcem relucebat. Cum per urbem transiremus, multa et varia edebantur ludorum spectacula." Ritter-, Hof-, und Pilger-Reise, s. 23.

the room, took no notice of his presence. Advancing farther into the hall, Charles again fell upon his knee. Still the duke maintained his attitude of indifference. It was not until the obeisance had been again repeated, that the stern etiquette of the Burgundian court allowed the sovereign to embrace, with tears of joy and pride, the son who had returned to him with a double wreath of victory upon his brow.[40]

This wreath, however, was already somewhat faded. A few weeks after the Count of Charolais had quitted France he had begun to receive messages and letters from his allies warning him of the insecurity of the conquests they had made; and, on the 21st of January, three days previous to that on which the treaty with Liége was ratified by Charles, Louis, in a document of not less remarkable tenor, had announced the fact, that, for "certain just and reasonable causes," he had retaken possession of "his duchy of Normandy."[41]

[40] Ritter-, Hof-, und Pilger-Reise, s. 24.—Duclercq, tom. iv. p. 253.—Saint-Simon notices a somewhat similar reception of a Duke of Lorraine by Louis XIV.

[41] Lettres patentes par lesquelles le Roy Louys XI. reprend la Normandie, Lenglet, tom. ii. pp. 567.

CHAPTER VIII.

HOW THE KING RECOVERED NORMANDY — STATE OF DINANT.

1466.

ON the termination of the War of the Public Weal Charles of France had set out, as already stated, in company with his friend the Duke of Brittany, to take possession of the great domain which had been settled upon him as "his appanage." The suite of the two princes was composed chiefly of the same active and adroit politicians who had originally planned the enterprise against the king, and who had formed that union of the great vassals which he found it impossible to dissolve.[1] Their number was swollen by the addition of many persons of the same stamp,—Dunois, Dammartin, and others,—who had played conspicuous parts in the last reign, but who had been treated by Louis with harshness or contempt. For this treatment they had now obtained compensation; but was not a large debt of gratitude still due to them from the king's brother, whom they had rescued from absolute dependence and comparative obscurity, and raised to eminence and power? At the court of Francis they had lived only as refugees, performing whatever services were demanded in return for the protection afforded to them by that prince. But in Normandy they expected that this position would be reversed. They were the pa-

[1] Commines, tom. i. pp. 105, 107.—Duclercq, tom. iv. p. 240.—Basin, tom. ii. p. 141.

trons; the duke was the client. They were to shape his policy and conduct his administration, not by private suggestions or intrigues, but as his acknowledged counsellors and ministers. To prevent any interference with this design, they proposed that Charles should make all his appointments before his entrance into the capital of his new dominions.[2]

His arrival there was impatiently looked for both by the people and by the nobles. All classes had hailed with joy the restoration of their province to its place among the great fiefs. The greatest of all the provinces in extent and natural resources, inferior in actual wealth and population only to Flanders,—which contributed nothing to the necessities of the monarchy, —Normandy had no sooner been wrested from the English than its revenues became the main support of the French crown. By the manner, too, in which the taxes were imposed and collected, the sums that went into the royal exchequer formed, according to the common opinion, but a small part of the amount extorted by the fiscal agents. On the accession of the present monarch the people of Normandy had urgently remonstrated against these iniquities; but, though Louis had given the most gracious and plausible replies and promised a great scheme of amelioration, the taxes had been largely increased, and, if we may credit the testimony of a well informed but strongly prejudiced witness, the mode of raising them had been rendered still more oppressive.[3] What made the burden heavier was the fact that the people who contributed thus largely to the maintenance of royalty were seldom shone upon by its beneficent rays. The money went

[2] Basin, tom. ii. p. 142.

[3] Basin, tom. ii. cap. 9, 10, 11, et al.

abroad or was expended in private channels, instead of descending in profuse and grateful showers on the places whence it had been absorbed. Whenever Louis visited the province he came unattended by a train, declined any pompous reception, and, aided by his mean air and vulgar features, was enabled, when he wished, to maintain a strict incognito.

Now all was to be changed. Rouen was to become the seat of an independent government, the residence of a splendid court. Nobles and people were to share, though doubtless in a very unequal degree, in the advantages that could not fail to result. Among the former class were some, pre-eminent by their position or their birth, who looked forward with peculiar satisfaction to the establishment of a new order of things. The Norman bishops and abbots had suffered more than any others of their order from the arbitrary manner in which Louis had abolished some of its principal immunities. The great nobles, who had received from him the same treatment as their compeers in other parts of the realm, treasured the traditions of a former age when their ancestors had been the magnates of a court that cared little for the frowns of a king of France. The prelates, therefore, in Normandy, and the heads of the great families, had long been the bitterest enemies whom Louis had in his dominions.[4] It

[4] This is the party whose sentiments are represented with a concentrated bitterness by Basin, one of its most distinguished leaders. He is our chief authority in all that relates to Normandy. His exposition of the state of that province throughout the reigns of Charles VII. and Louis XI. is very instructive. One strong motive of the nobility in seeking a change of government seems to have been a desire to emancipate themselves from the tyranny of the robe, peculiarly oppressive in a region where, as in Scotland, legal astuteness and a litigious disposition have always been among the most striking characteristics of the people.

was they who, in the late war, had struck the final blow, to which he had succumbed, by betraying the province into the hands of the confederates. They had proclaimed his brother Duke of Normandy before the king's consent was extorted. His assent, indeed, was merely the effect and the ratification of their act. In this view, it was to them that Charles was indebted for his present position. They were now assembled at Rouen, and had made preparations for his reception. They intended to revive on this occasion the ancient forms with which their ancestors had been used to inaugurate the reign of a new duke;—from their hands Charles was to receive the ring with which the duchy was said to be espoused by its prince; and, when the ceremonies were completed, they were to occupy their natural position as the supporters of his throne and his great officers of state.

Between the friends who accompanied and the friends who awaited him,—these in possession of his duchy, those of his person,—Charles's position was that of one who, having, after a protracted and expensive law-suit, established his right to an estate, finds it heavily encumbered with mortgages, while he is surrounded by Jews and attorneys who had advanced him the means of living and of prosecuting his claim, and who now present him with their accounts. There was also on either side a multitude of inferior suitors, so numerous that, had all the offices in the kingdom been at his disposal, many of his adherents must still have been dismissed unrequited.[5] The king himself had been in-

[5] "Tantus enim ad curiam ejus pro hisce rebus fiebat undique concursus, ut vix, ad satisfaciendum parvæ postulationum portioni, et importune rogantium, totius regni officia suffecissent." Basin, tom. ii. p. 142.

volved in the like embarrassments. He too, at his accession, had found himself overwhelmed with obligations and besieged by a host of applicants. But Louis had a way of meeting difficulties peculiar to himself. With a thousand polite speeches he had slipped away from the pressing attentions of his Burgundian friends. With his own subjects he had not thought it necessary to stand upon ceremony: when leaving Tours, in December, 1461, on a journey to the south, he caused it to be proclaimed in the streets, with sound of trumpet, that no one should follow him, under pain of death.[6]

Such an example Charles of France was not competent to imitate. He wanted the adroitness to evade, the boldness to crush, the obstacles that thrust themselves upon his path. On his arrival at Sainte-Cathérine du Mont, in the neighbourhood of Rouen, he was informed that the arrangements for his reception were completed. Yet from day to day he deferred making his entrance into the capital, unwilling to break with his present companions and unable to comply with their exorbitant requests. From these perplexities he was relieved by no efforts of his own. His subjects in the city, impatient to salute him and irritated by the delay, were no sooner informed by the nobles that their prince was a prisoner in the hands of the Bretons, than they assembled in arms, presented themselves before him at the place where he was lodged, and carried him off in triumph. This was an insult which the Duke of Brittany could ill digest. He had pleased himself with the idea of appearing before the people of Normandy as their liberator from the tyranny of the king. At

[6] Chastellain, p. 189.

his court Charles of France had taken refuge; by him the prince had been supplied with an army to enable him to vindicate his rights. Francis had, therefore, expected to be received at Rouen as Philip of Burgundy had been received at Paris when he brought back his royal *protégé* from exile and placed him on the throne. Disgusted with the different treatment he had experienced, the duke refused to listen to the overtures made to him for a reconciliation, and quitted the neighbourhood of the capital. Instead, however, of returning home, he established himself at Caen, in Lower Normandy, and took possession of several other towns, while his troops, spreading themselves over this portion of the province, treated it as a conquered country, devastated the fields and pillaged the inhabitants.[7]

Thus the Normans, in their anxiety to have a duke of their own, had got two. When tidings of these events reached the king he considered it incumbent on him to proffer his mediation.

Since the close of the war Louis had been busily employed. In the first place, he had dismissed nearly all his ministers, and, in most cases, he had taken back those whom he had formerly removed.[8] He had also made a change, if not of policy, at least in his tactics. Hitherto, in his attempts to curb the power of feudalism, he had directed his attacks against the whole of his great vassals, with scarcely an exception. He had endeavoured, it is true, to cover his approaches by a lavish exhibition of friendliness; but the mask was too thin to conceal his real designs. As a natural

[7] Basin, tom. ii. p. 143, et seq.—Commines, tom. i. pp. 107, 108.—Duclercq, tom. iv. pp. 240-242.—De Troyes, Lenglet, tom. ii. p. 52.

[8] De Troyes, pp. 51, 52.

consequence, all had united against him; and the result had shown that, when all were united, he had little chance in a contest with them. He now determined to follow that course which his own experience, as well as the counsels of his friend Sforza, pointed out as more expedient. He must endeavour to divide his opponents, and that not by delusive promises, but by real concessions. Among the members of the confederacy were some whose ambition he might perhaps gratify by substantial marks of favour without endangering his vital interests. He incurred little risk by forming an alliance with the house of Anjou and covertly aiding its enterprises; for these enterprises were directed against foreign powers, and were more likely to end in ruin than in success. He might safely encourage to a higher flight the aspiring spirit of the Constable Saint-Pol; the loftier his ambition the more galling would be his dependence on the house of Burgundy. But the person for whose friendship Louis bid highest was the Duke of Bourbon. The estates of this prince were situated in the centre of the kingdom, at a distance from those of his allies. He was, therefore, the one who could be most closely watched and most easily subdued. While acting in concert with the others he had inflicted serious damage on the king, compelling him, as we have seen, to remain absent from his capital at the moment when from different quarters the forces of the confederates were marching to attack it. Alone he was not formidable; as a friend he might be serviceable; and his friendship was to be purchased at a price which the king could afford to pay. Accordingly the Duke of Bourbon now received the appointment of "lieutenant-general," with military command over a

large portion of the kingdom. The government of Languedoc was bestowed upon him, with a pension of twenty-four thousand livres; and Louis gave his own illegitimate daughter in marriage to the duke's bastard brother. At a somewhat later period a union between the legitimate branches of the two families was destined to cement the alliance. These benefactions were bestowed partly in anticipation and partly in requital of valuable services rendered by the duke. Louis had formed a very favourable opinion of his talents, applauding the dexterity and spirit with which he had carried out the views of the confederates in the conquest of Normandy. Might not the same skilful agent be employed in its reconquest?

In company with the Chancellor of France and other officers of state, and bearing a commission which authorized him to employ his efforts for settling the troubles in Normandy, Bourbon entered that province early in December, 1465. He sent his credentials to Charles, and requested him to name a place of meeting.[9] But this embassy of peace and conciliation was escorted by a considerable body of troops; and the king himself, assembling a stronger force, followed cautiously in the same direction.

Attended by his principal nobles, Charles of France arrived at Louviers, six leagues south of Rouen, for the purpose of holding an interview with Bourbon. The latter, however, failed to keep the appointment. Three days passed without his appearance. At length tidings

[9] Basin, tom. iii. p. 263.—The work here cited is the author's "Apologia," printed during his lifetime, but circulated only among his friends, and wholly forgotten until recently edited by M. Quicherat. Its account of the present proceedings is more graphic and circumstantial than that which the writer has given in his History of Louis XI.

were received of his movements. He had arrived the day before at Evreux, five leagues distant, and had been received by the authorities with the distinction suited to his rank and mission. But no sooner had he entered the town than he had turned out the garrison, dismissed all the public functionaries, and taken formal possession of the place in the king's name. These news were followed by others equally strange. Vernon, situated at the same distance as Evreux but in a different direction, had been seized in a similar manner; and from both places, forming with Louviers the vertices of an equilateral triangle,[10] troops were now rapidly approaching, while by still other routes different parties were in motion—showing that the surrounding country had been suddenly flooded with invaders. Charles and his counsellors were now awakened to their danger, and retired hastily in the direction of the capital; while the royal army, advancing farther into the country, and spreading itself over a wider extent, found little difficulty in uprooting a government so recently planted and in re-establishing the royal authority.[11]

The king now made his appearance on the scene.

[10] "Sunt enim tria hujuscemodi velut in triangulo æquilatero prope invicem sita." Basin, tom. iii. p. 266.

[11] "Erat enim ipse dux Normanniæ velut arbor recens plantata in terra sua, quæ nondum missis in altum radicibus solo tenuiter adhuc cohærebat." Basin, tom. iii. p. 270.

Basin (tom. iii. p. 267) takes credit to himself for having warned Charles of his danger and suggested his retreat. The dean of Rouen gave the same advice. Others of the prince's counsellors denied the necessity — whence Basin supposes them to have been parties to the plot. His suspicions are rendered probable by the fact that one of these persons had been in secret communication with Louis. (See Quicherat's note to this passage.) Commines (tom. i. p. 108) intimates that the division between the dukes of Normandy and Britanny had been fomented by agents of the king. There is also evidence that the surrender of the towns was partly the result of treachery.

His purpose, as he stated, was to have an interview with the Duke of Brittany, and he accordingly proceeded to Caen. Still smarting under the indignity he had received from the Normans, Francis was easily induced to give assurance of his neutrality in the present crisis. He even affixed his signature to a treaty by which he promised to grant no asylum in his dominions to any person who should fall under the royal displeasure.[12] Nor was this the only advantage which Louis derived from his journey to Caen. He was there brought face to face with men whose abilities he had lately learned to appreciate at their true value. We have no account of what took place in his interviews with them; but it is certain that from this date began a change in their relations with him, which led, immediately in the case of some of these persons, at a later period in that of others, to their defection from the Duke of Brittany and their return to the court of France, where they enjoyed even greater favour than in the preceding reign[13]—favour proportioned, as their former wrongs had been, to their several degrees of merit. Dammartin, so long the especial object of the king's aversion, obtained the first place in his confidence, and was the person chiefly employed by him in the conduct of military operations.

From the moment at which the plot had been fully developed by Bourbon's occupation of Evreux and other towns, and his advance upon Louviers, Charles had despatched envoy after envoy to remonstrate with his brother against this flagrant violation of the treaty. But where were his associates, who only two months

[12] Lenglet, tom. ii. p. 564.—The treaty bears the date of Dec. 20.

[13] Commines, tom. i. p. 111.

ago had formed this treaty, having pertinaciously refused to accept of other terms, and made the cession of Normandy the *sine qua non* of an arrangement with the king? The Duke of Brittany, who had been selected as Charles's guardian and protector, was now estranged from him. The Duke of Bourbon,—who, at the time of the negotiations, had warned his allies to put no trust in Louis, for, whatever conditions he might submit to, he would assuredly break them,—was now assisting in the fulfilment of his own prophecy. The Count of Charolais, to whose resolution and superior resources the king had chiefly owed his defeat, was now at a distance, exerting his "invincible power" against another enemy. While at Saint-Trond he received an embassy from Charles of France urgently soliciting assistance.[14] But neither the state of his operations nor the condition of his army allowed him to think of interfering by force;[15] and he was therefore obliged to content himself with sending envoys to the king, with a letter beseeching him to "take in good part" the representations which they were instructed "in all humility" to make.[16]

In this desolate situation, the Duke of Normandy—if we may give the title to a prince who, having but just assumed it, was about to lose it—made a move, which would have been fatal to him even had there still existed any chances in his favour. He instructed his

[14] Basin, who gives the account, was himself the principal member of this embassy.

[15] He, however, gave orders that a force should be collected in Picardy, and sent to protect Dieppe; but before this could be done the place surrendered. Commines, tom. i. p. 109.

[16] "Ausquelz j'ay chargié vous dire et exposer aucunes choses de ma part en toute humilité, touchant laditte matière. . . . . Si vous supplie . . . . . prendre mon petit advis au fait de mondit seigneur de Normendie en bonne part." Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii. p. 421.

envoys to say that he was willing to refer the question of his appanage to the other princes or to a certain number of them, provided the king would engage to abide by their decision.[17] This proposal was construed by Louis as an offer to surrender Normandy, and, by a subtle anachronism, was made the starting-point and basis of his late proceedings. His brother had expressed a desire to be relieved of a government, the cares of which were too weighty for him to bear;[18] and the king had consented to take the burden again upon his own shoulders. He acknowledged, however, the justice of the prince's claim to be indemnified for his loss. What fief was Louis, then, prepared to bestow in lieu of Normandy? He did not recur to his former proposition, to establish his brother in Champagne. He said nothing of Guienne, which had also been discussed during the negotiations. What he now offered was the county of Roussillon, which in fact was not a French province at all, but a strip of territory on the northern slopes of the Pyrenees, belonging to Aragon, taken by Louis as security for the repayment of a loan, and, with the best will on his part to retain it, not to be counted upon as a permanent acquisition.[19] These difficulties were stated by Charles in answer to the proposal; and, as a further and fatal objection,—the force of which Louis could not fail to see and acknowledge,—he urged that in Rousillon he would be at a great distance from all his relatives, and especially from those among them in whom he most confided.[20]

[17] Instructions des négociateurs envoyés au Roi par le duc de Normandie, Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii. p. 410, et seq.

[18] Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii. pp. 422, note, 430, 432, et al.

[19] See Mr. Prescott's account of Rousillon and the disaffection of the inhabitants while under the rule of Louis XI., Hist. of Ferdinand and Isabella, vol. i. pp. 50, 130.

[20] "Mondit seigneur ne tient le

Before the negotiations had dwindled to this point the actual recovery of Normandy had been completed. It had been agreed that Charles should have an interview with the Duke of Brittany,—to whom, in his perplexity and need, his feeble mind still turned for counsel and assistance,—and the seaport town of Honfleur, about midway between Caen and Rouen, had been named as the place of meeting. As all the roads were occupied by the royal forces, the prince requested and received his brother's safe-conduct both for his journey to Honfleur and his return. Hardly had he quitted the capital when the king's troops appeared before it, and the inhabitants of every class immediately united in sending a deputation to Louis inviting him to enter. Having loudly proclaimed their unalterable fidelity to their duke at the moment of his departure, they were now smitten with remorse for having ever acknowledged a sovereign to whom they had been expressly commanded by the king to render the same obedience as to himself. They entreated, therefore, that letters of remission might be granted to them for this fault; and Louis, while he assured them that there was no occasion for such a form, since their conduct was in no respect blameworthy, complied with their request. He excepted only six persons, chiefs of that party which he knew to be especially hostile to him; and even they were excepted only because, being the enemies of the Duke of Brittany, the king was bound by his late treaty with that prince to regard them also as his own.[21]

conté de Roussillon que par forme de gagière; . . . et pour la garde, fauldroit grant nombre de gens de guerre que ne pourrions soustenir. Aussi c'est ung lieu hors des limites du royaume, loing de tous noz parens et amys, et mesmement des principaulx en qui avons nostre confiance, et où il n'y a point de seurté." Lettre du duc de Normandie à l'Évêque de Verdun, Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii. p. 443.

[21] Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii. pp.

The seizure of Rouen was no infraction of the safe-conduct granted to Charles. He might still return thither without danger of being molested on the way. But when he arrived?—this was a question that must give him pause. What the unfortunate prince had now to think of was not the settlement of his appanage, but his personal security. He had no resource but flight, and his first idea was to make his escape to Flanders. By land he could not hope to effect it. The eastern frontier of Normandy was so vigilantly guarded—as we are told by one who had just crossed it to find himself in hopeless exile—that a hare could scarcely have passed in safety.[22] The passage by sea, however, was still open; and Charles went on board of a small vessel then lying at Honfleur. But the wind was adverse; and his fears would not allow him to wait for a change. He returned to land, and set out for Brittany in company with Francis, who had now awakened to the consciousness that, in gratifying his resentment for a trivial slight, he had made himself the dupe and the tool of his natural enemy. Without, therefore, regarding the principal stipulation of the treaty he had lately signed, he again granted Charles an asylum at his court, where the two princes had ample leisure for reflecting

419, 432, 438, et al.—Basin, tom. ii. p. 160, et seq.—Among the persons thus excepted were two accused by Basin of having been among the accomplices of the king. His statement, however, is supported rather than invalidated by this fact, since it appears that they shortly afterwards received letters of grace, although in some parts of the province Tristan l'Hermite was busily at work. "Audit temps, furent plusieurs personnes, officiers et autres dudit pais de Normandie, exécutez et noyes par le prévost des mareschaulx pour les questions du Roy et Monseigneur Charles." De Troyes, p. 54.

[22] "Vias etiam omnes atque itinera, quibus ad terram ducis Burgundiæ ex Normannia patere potuisset accessus, tam exacta vigilantia observari fecit, ut vix ex una terra in alteram vel lepus transire potuisset." Basin, tom. iii. p. 274.

on the folly by which their recent triumph had been brought to so ridiculous a termination.[23]

Louis entered Rouen about the close of January. An operation, skilfully planned and skilfully conducted, had been crowned with merited success. Pleased with the result, he felt a natural desire that others should sympathize in his pleasure; and it occurred to him that his cousin of Charolais, in particular, might be glad to have some account of his proceedings, and also some explanation of the reasons for them. He was the more ready to make such a communication, because it was his settled purpose that the count should be made acquainted with all his important affairs, not only as a mark of confidence, but in order that his sovereign might have the benefit of his excellent advice.[24] In the minute instructions given to his envoys, baseless assertions, unwarranted assumptions, and sophistical arguments are interwoven with an open and forcible statement of the real grounds that justified his act. He reminded Charles that, when the demand had been originally made that he should settle the duchy of Normandy upon his brother, he had answered it by an absolute refusal, and that subsequently the negotiations had taken a different turn. In the mean time the province had revolted from him, and Charles of France had then, in violation of a truce which had been proclaimed, taken upon himself the title of duke, and

[23] "Ces deux ducs," remarks Commines, "estoient saiges apres le coup"—a proverbial characteristic, he tells us, of the Bretons. Tom. i. p. 111.

[24] "Le roy désiroit bien que mondit seigneur de Charolois feust bien adverty de tout le démené de ces matières, tant à ce qu'il sceust comme tout a esté fait, comme pour la parfaicte amour et fiance qu'il a à mondit seigneur de Charolois, et que toutes les grans matières du roy lui soient communicquées, pour en avoir son bon advis et conseil." Instructions des ambassadeurs envoyés par le Roi au comte de Charollais, Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii. p. 424.

under that title exercised an illegal authority. Resistance would have been of no avail. The king had therefore yielded. But he had yielded passively and under constraint. He had remained silent when Charles did homage to him at Vincennes; he had regarded the grant as of no validity because a compulsory one; he had secretly protested against it; and hope had never deserted his heart that he should be able, with the blessing of God, to recover Normandy, and to join it inseparably to the crown.[25] No sooner had his brother entered on the government than he had found it too weighty a charge for him to sustain. He had acknowledged it to be so, and had requested aid from the king. The latter had sent the Duke of Bourbon to treat with him amicably on the subject. Louis himself had gone to Caen, at the request of the Duke of Brittany. He had made no attempt to recover the province by arms. But the inhabitants had of their own accord at once acknowledged him as their king, their sovereign, and their natural lord. Normandy was, in truth, too great and too important a province to be allowed to remain in the possession of any subject. It was the chief jewel of the crown. It had been always regarded, from its extent, its situation, and the fertility of its soil, the number of its people, the strength of its fortresses, and the revenues that were derived from it, as equal to one-third of the whole realm.[26] It was exposed to the

[25] "Le roy, pour ce qu'il congnoissoit ledit bail non estre raisonnable et ne se devoir faire, ne perdit oncques en son courage la possession dudit pays, et qu'il n'eust vouloir, pour le bien de lui et de tout le royaume, quant Dieu plairoit, la reprendre et remectre en sa main et l'entretenir joincte à la couronne inséparablement." Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii. 429.

[26] "Normandie est le principal fleuron de la couronne; et par les anciens a tousjours esté réputé (eu regard et considéracion à la qualité et situacion

invasions of the English, the ancient enemies of France; it was the quarter on which their attacks were always commenced. The protection and resources of the crown were necessary for its defence; its fall would entail the subjugation of the country.[27] Former sovereigns, and especially Charles the Fifth, surnamed the Wise, had expressly forbidden by their ordinances that the province should ever again be held as a fief; jurists regarded the alienation of it as illegal; and therefore it was, and to prevent the absolute ruin of the monarchy, that Louis had taken it again under his own rule. It was his intention, however, to provide a suitable appanage for his brother, such as had been usually bestowed upon the principal members of the royal family. He had desired to confer with Charles upon the subject; but the prince had thought proper to quit the province; and, although the Duke of Bourbon and other persons had been sent after him, he had persisted in withdrawing into Brittany. In conclusion, Louis expressed his satisfaction with the messages he had

du pays, aux prééminences et autorité d'icellui tant en places fortes et subgets dudit pays qu'autrement, et en la grant revenue dudit pays) la tierce partie du royaume de France: qui n'est pas appanaige convenable pour frère de roy de France, ne raisonnable d'estre séparé de la couronne, ne oncques semblable appanaige ne fut à nul autre frère de roy." Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii. p. 428.

[27] "Quant ledit appanaige eust tenu, il s'en feust peu ensuir la perdicion et destruction dudit duchié de Normandie, et peut-estre de tout le royaume; car le pays de Normandie est voisin d'Angleterre et des Anglois, qui sont anciens ennemis de ce royaumé, et communément quant les Anglois ont voulu faire leurs descentes en ce royaume depuis cent ou VIxx ans en çà, ils les ont tousjours faictes par le pays de Normandie; et si ledit pays de Normandie estoit séparé de la couronne, il est impossible qu'il peult estre souffisant pour soy garder et défendre de l'invasion desditz Anglois; et si ainsi estoit que ledit pays de Normandie feust perdu, chacun peut bien veoir et congnoistre quel préjudice ce seroit à tout le royaume, et les inconvéniens qui en pourroient ensuir." Doc. Inéd., Mélanges, tom. ii. p. 428.

received from the Count of Charolais recommending him to deal mildly with his brother. This was precisely what he had done; mild methods, indeed, were those which he preferred to use in all his affairs; and he had the most perfect trust that the count, when informed of these matters, would continue to manifest his goodwill to the king, and his regard for the honour of the crown and the welfare of the realm.[28]

Thus all that the king had done was to revoke a grant in itself invalid, and to resume a seat already vacated. Yet there was a possibility that this reasoning, clear and cogent as it was, might fail to satisfy a mind so peculiar in the fixedness of its views as that of the Count of Charolais. He would perhaps regard the act simply as a breach of faith; he might imagine that his absence had been seized upon as an opportunity for violating a treaty which he had had the principal share in making; and, as he was not only hasty in forming his opinions, but obstinate in adhering to them, it would not be strange if he should adopt a course of action against which the milder methods preferred by Louis would be of little avail. The king lost no time in preparing for this contingency. He drove his ministers to the verge of desperation by the shifts to which he compelled them to resort for replenishing the treasury. To provide material for the construction of new pieces of ordnance he ordered the bells to be removed from the churches, leaving but a single one in each parish. In the course of the spring he assembled a great army on the frontiers of Picardy. But these forces were intended only for defence. He did not design to make or to provoke an attack. He

[28] Doc. Inéd. Mélanges, tom. ii. p. 423-434.

affected to be in fear of a new invasion by the English, and gave out that his preparations were designed for meeting this danger.[29] At the same time he sent envoys to Calais to negotiate a renewal of the existing truce, directing that they should visit his cousin of Charolais on the way, and acquaint him with the object of their mission.

Charles viewed these proceedings with a sullen eye, conscious that, while his allies had been outwitted, he himself was outgeneralled. All he could now do was to strengthen the garrisons in his possessions on the Somme, whither he had gone, soon after his return to Brussels, to receive the homage of his new subjects. Instead of following the example of Louis, who had treated these towns with particular indulgence, he burdened them with heavy imposts. This was the more impolitic as they had already given utterance to their discontent in being again separated from the crown. It was reported also that the king had offered a part of Picardy to the English as the price of a permanent peace. Absurd as this rumour was, it presented the Count of Charolais with an occasion for venting some portion of his ill-humour in a remonstrance which he addressed to Louis. "Monseigneur," he wrote, "I have received information which, if true, ill accords with the many gracious words you have recently given me both in writing and by word of mouth. Of what is your own, Monseigneur, you can dispose according to your good pleasure; but, in respect to what is mine, it seems to me that you will do better by leaving it in my possession than by seeking to transfer it into the hands of the enemies of France.

[29] Duclercq, tom. iv. pp. 254, 255.—De Troyes, p. 57.

I pray you, therefore, to put an entire and immediate stop to such overtures, and so to act that I may still have reason to remain, as with all my heart I desire, your most humble servant."[30] This letter, dictated by spleen and disappointment, and breathing hostility and menace, was written at Namur on the 16th of August, when Charles had already set out on his second expedition into the principality of Liége.

Fifteen miles south of Namur, but on the opposite bank of the Meuse, stands Dinant, a place of some six thousand inhabitants. The limestone cliff behind it rises precipitously to a height of several hundred feet, and tapers to a pinnacle surmounted by a citadel of modern construction. Through the narrow valley between the river and the base of the cliff runs a single street, of length and width sufficient for one of the principal thoroughfares of a great capital, but lined only with scattered dwellings, and crossed only by short lanes that lead to the river's side—seeming like a giant trunk which has been stripped of its foliage and shorn of its branches.

In the fifteenth century, down to the year 1466, this was the site of a populous and thriving town,[31] inhabited

[30] Lettre du comte de Charolois, Duclos, tom. iii. p. 231.—The king's reply — commencing, "Très-cher et amé frère," grave, earnest, and elaborate in its disclaimers and denials, fortified with all manner of arguments, and referring Charles to a special embassy despatched at the same time for a more particular verbal statement—is an admirable exhibition of assumed simplicity. It closes with a characteristic touch, expressive of injured innocence and wounded honour. "Quand un tel rapport nous eût été fait de vous, nous ne l'eussions pas légèrement cru ne voulu croire." Hist. de Bourgogne, tom. iv. pp. 346, 347.

[31] Commines calls it "ville tres forte de sa grandeur, et tres riche;" Duclercq, "la plus riche ville que on sceust et la plus forte;" and he even asserts that, in these respects, it far surpassed Liége itself. Theodoricus Paulus applies to it the epithets "op-

by a race of industrious artisans, pre-eminent for their skill in the manufacture of copper. The excellence of their workmanship is attested by existing specimens—organ-screens, baptismal fonts, and other ecclesiastical decorations. But the fame of Dinant had been chiefly spread by its production of more common and useful articles, especially of kitchen utensils,—"pots and pans, and similar wares,"—which, under the name of *Dinanderie*, were known to housewives throughout Europe, being regularly exported not only to France and Germany, but to England, Spain, and other countries.[32] With England, especially, Dinant had maintained commercial relations for several centuries. Its traders

ulentissimum, ditissimum et potentissimum;" and Basin speaks of it as "illud superbum et opulentum Dinantum." Its fine churches and wealthy monasteries are also noticed, and especially its great foundries, with machines and implements worth a hundred thousand florins.

The natural features of the locality show that in extent the place can never greatly have exceeded its present limits. But the population was probably dense, and several subject towns (Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. p. 229, et al.) contributed to the wealth and importance of Dinant. The topographical peculiarities are well described in the interesting paper of M. Adolphe Borgnet (Annales de la Société Archéologique de Namur, 1853), whose remark, however, respecting the exaggerations of the chroniclers, is itself a much more palpable exaggeration. They do not, as he pretends, describe "a second Nineveh." They all concur in representing Dinant as a very opulent town; and on this point the testimony of persons who had witnessed many scenes of grandeur and prosperity of which the modern Belgian perceives only the signs and vestiges may be safely accepted.

[32] "Ouvraiges de cuivre qu'on appelle Dinanderie: qui sont en effect potz et poisles, et choses semblables." Commines, tom. i. p. 114.—"Les bourgeois et marchans de ceste ditte ville," say the magistrates of Dinant in a letter to Louis XI., "ont fréquentet et communiquiet en vostre dit roialme et ausi ceulx d'icellui en icelle, et ce de si longtemps que point n'est mémore du contraire, en y exerchans marchandieses par espécial de denrées appelées batterie, comme paëlles, bachins, chaudrons et autres, sur laquelle marchandiese ceste ditte ville est principallement fondée de grande antiquitet, laquelle n'est pas tant seulement exercée ou communiquié en vostre dit roialme, mais ausi en Espaigne, Allemaingne, Angleterre et en pluseurs aultres marches et pays." Borgnet, Sac de Dinant, Appendice, VI.

enjoyed in that kingdom the same privileges as the members of the Hanseatic League; and an English company had long been established in the town, where their nation was held in particular esteem.[33]

The brass-founders of Dinant held the same position as the clothiers at Louvain and the weavers at Ghent. They formed what was usually called the "great guild," and were a kind of middle class between the nine inferior guilds and the merchants and persons of independent means,—or a class largely consisting of such persons,—to whom the name of *bourgeois* was exclusively given.[34] This was not only a social, but a political division, each of the three classes having a separate and equal vote in the election of the council and the decision of such questions as were referred by the council to the popular assemblies.

The citizens of Dinant are described in the chronicles and other writings of the time as intoxicated by the pride of wealth and long-continued prosperity; as eagerly rushing into hostilities with a prince whose superior power they did not pause to estimate; as madly tempting à doom decreed by Heaven as the just punishment of their insensate violence. Such a representation of a people assiduously engaged in the arts of peace, and dependent for their existence on the security of their commerce, cannot but appear strange. Happily, we

[33] Borgnet, Appendice, I.—Dinant required the insertion in the treaties with Louis of a clause providing against the danger of a consequent rupture of its commercial intercourse and friendly relations with England.

[34] "Les bourgeois représentaient ce patriciat qui, depuis un siècle environ, avait cessé d'être un élément prépondérant," says M. Borgnet—an elucidation which, as too often happens, leaves the reader to his own conjectures at the precise point where a more certain light is wanted. The full designation of this class of the inhabitants—"les bourgeois d'enmi la ville"—would suggest a distinction between the original settlers and a subsequent colony forbidden to encroach upon them.

have, on this subject, other and better sources of information. A small portion of the municipal archives of Dinant is still in existence. Scanty as are the documents thus brought to our aid,—and the marvel is, not that they are so few, but that even these should have been preserved,—they afford a glimpse at the interior of the ill-fated town, and excite not only commiseration but respect for the greater number of its inhabitants.[35]

Far from plunging headlong into war, Dinant, conscious of its exposed situation, at a distance from its confederate towns and almost environed by the dominions of the Duke of Burgundy, was with difficulty induced to join the alliance against him. Although it had concurred in abjuring the authority of Louis of Bourbon, it had never fallen under the sway of the demagogues, or been agitated by that violent spirit which convulsed the capital. The municipal government pursued its ordinary course; and, whatever may have been the inclinations of a portion of the people, the magistrates were for a time successful in their efforts to preserve peace. Dinant was, in fact, forced into the contest by a natural consequence of its hostile relations with Bouvignes. The latter place, inferior in all other respects to its rival, exulted in the protection of a powerful sovereign ready to support it in every act of aggression. In this quarter, therefore, the war was purely a local matter, the continuance of an ancient feud stimulated by fresh provocations. Even the insults to the house of Burgundy were really aimed at

[35] The discovery and publication of this interesting series of documents are not the least important of the many and vast obligations which M. Gachard has conferred upon the student of Belgian history. He has also supplied M. Borgnet with some links in the series which had eluded his own earlier researches.

a far lower and nearer mark. The people of Bouvignes had recourse to similar methods of exasperation. They hurled over the walls of Dinant an effigy of the French king, accompanying the act with opprobrious speeches, which enraged his allies, but do not seem, when brought to the ears of Louis, to have had the effect of disturbing his equanimity.[36]

Yet it often happens that the report of an event excites a stronger sensation than was felt at the time of its occurrence by the actors or spectators, who first become aware of its importance when made acquainted with the view taken of it at a distance. Dinant was unconscious of the enormity of its offence until warned by its sister towns to lose no time in disavowing the act and punishing the guilty parties. Rumours of the affair had flown far and wide. The people of Bouvignes, indeed, had taken care that the intelligence should be carried direct to the persons most concerned. The aged and good Duke Philip was, of course, violently incensed, and the meek and pious Isabella, quitting her conventual retreat, vehemently demanded the ruin of a people in vindication of her spotless virtue.[37]

Dinant was naturally startled at the loud echoes awakened by its mimic thunder, and an embassy was despatched to claim assistance from the French king. He was requested to send both troops and artillery as well as a "captain" to superintend the preparations

[36] Borgnet, Appendice, II.—Instruction pour les députés envoyés en France, Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. pp. 218-222.

[37] "Este falmye commune que tres haute princesse de Bourgoingne, à cause desdites injures, at conchut telle haynne sur cestedite ville de Dinant, qu'elle a juré, comme on dist, que, s'il li devoit couster tout son vaillant, fera ruynner cestedite ville, en metant toutes personnes à l'espee: pour laquelle chose entendons que soit à l'Escluse." Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. p. 222.

for resisting an attack. This was in the latter part of September, 1465, when the prospects of Louis were at their darkest, and he was in no condition to afford aid to his allies. Yet the tidings, shortly after, of his having concluded a peace had, at first, the effect of quieting their apprehensions. Were they not accompanied by the assurance, under his own hand, that the people of Liége had the option of becoming a party to the treaty?[38] It was necessary, indeed, that they should make a proper submission to the sovereign whom they had so wantonly attacked; and the citizens of Dinant, with more real unanimity than those of the capital, embraced the offer and prepared to comply with the conditions. Notice was given of the cessation of hostilities; and, although the people of Bouvignes were only emboldened by this announcement to renew their attacks, the government of Dinant would not suffer any reprisals to be made, but contented itself with calm and dignified remonstrances. Nov. 1465.

Meanwhile the ringleaders in the foolish demonstra-

[38] The desperate situation of Louis must, we suppose, be accepted as a sufficient excuse for his breach of faith in concluding a separate treaty. Having himself been compelled to surrender every thing demanded by his enemies, he could only recommend to his allies the same unqualified submission. His language indicates this feeling: "Sommes très contens des bons termes que nous avez tenus en ces matières. . . . Toutes voyes, veu que l'appointement est prins entre nous et les dessusditz, et mesmement en tout ce qui puet toucher bel oncle de Bourgongne et beau frère de Charolois, et que audit appointement estes comprins comme noz bons espéciaulx amis, et comme nous avons fait à tous noz aultres alliez et adhérens; nous vous prions que vueilliez déporter et désister de la guerre que avez encommenchié ès païs de nosditz oncle et beau frère. Et quant ainsy ne se feroit, veu que de présent la guerre cesse par deçà et qu'il y a appoinctement entre nous et les dessusditz, feroit à doubter que grosse armée et puissance de gens tombast sur vostre païs; dont grans inconvéniens pourroient ensuir, et à quoy seroit difficile chose à vous de y résister, et à nous de vous y secourir." Lettre du Roi aux Liégois, Doc. Inéd. sur l'Hist. de France, Mélanges, tom. ii. p. 401.

tion under the walls of Bouvignes had been arrested and secured. One of them, when conveyed to prison, appealed to the bystanders with the familiar cry, never heard with indifference by the burghers of a free town, "Franchises! to the rescue!" A tumult arose. The prisoners were liberated from the hands of the officers, and aided in making their escape; and a mob having collected in front of the civic hall, the magistrates, fearing for the safety of those who had furnished them with evidence, destroyed the depositions and abandoned their purpose. A few days afterwards, however, a message was received from Liége advising its ally of the perils which it must incur by affording the enemy any pretext for continuing the war. This communication having been published, the magistrates, backed by the authority of the capital, recovered their influence; and the fugitives were again seized and committed to prison, some of those who had aided in the rescue being foremost in effecting the recapture.[39]

The approach of the Count of Charolais at the head of a powerful army speedily dissipated the hopes founded on the lying assurances of the French monarch. Dinant, it was bruited abroad, was to be the first object of attack; and a panic fell upon the inhabitants, such as is felt by the natives of an African village when by taunts and bravadoes they have drawn the lion from his lair, and now behold him in his fury preparing to spring.

A period of suspense followed — two months of anxiety, of terror, of ceaseless prayers and efforts to avert the threatened blow. Letters and messages were sent in all directions, to invoke, not succour or protection, but counsel, sympathy, the

Dec. 1465. Jan. 1466.

[39] Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. pp. 229-237.

pleadings of some friendly voice: and the warmth of these appeals is often affectingly contrasted with the formal tone of even the most favourable replies. The envoys already sent having failed to gain admittance to the Burgundian princes, the strongest endeavours were made to secure the mediation of persons to whom, it was thought, a hearing could hardly be denied. The Abbot of Saint-Hubert and other high ecclesiastics residing in the neighbourhood of Dinant were entreated to undertake this mission—the magistrates representing in their letters that they were ready to make all possible reparation for an act which they had always disavowed and which they bitterly deplored, and stating the steps that had been taken with a view to the punishment of the offenders. Negotiations were also opened with some of the Burgundian nobles, who, as it seems, had expressed a willingness to render their good offices to the hapless town by interceding with their stern commander on its behalf. The agents employed in the affair were supplied with the means that might be thought the most effectual for stimulating the exertions of these exalted but not wholly disinterested advocates—to one of whom, the Lord of Haubourdin, we find the magistrates humbly apologizing for an unavoidable delay in the transmission of their memorials, and acknowledging the receipt of his previous intimation that he cannot spend much time in their affairs.[40]

[40] "Pour quoy, nous intimés vous envoier . . . lesdis noms le plus brief que porons, car, par aventure, ne porés mie longuement entendre ne vacquer en ceste matière." Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. p. 270.

The tone of these letters is the same throughout—humble, deprecatory, grateful. The matter is equally unvaried—the same assurances of contrition, the same offers of atonement, the same prayer for mercy: unmanly, perhaps, in a single suppliant pleading for himself, not so in those who were but the channels through which a people, the helpless as well as the

Lastly, the people of Dinant made a direct appeal to the man on whose single will depended the decision of their fate. Their supplication—addressed "to the most excellent, high, and puissant prince, and most redoubted lord, the Count of Charolais"—was expressed in the following terms: "The poor, humble, and obedient servants and subjects of the most reverend father in God, Louis of Bourbon, Bishop of Liége, and your *little neighbours and borderers*,[41] the burgomasters, council, and people of the town of Dinant, humbly represent, that it has come to their knowledge that the indignation of your most noble grace has been excited against the said town on account of certain injurious words spoken by some of the inhabitants thereof in contempt of your most noble person; for which words the said town is as bitterly sorry and displeased as it is possible to be, and, far from desiring to protect the delinquents, has caused

strong, uttered their anguish and their fears. "Vous prions tant cordialement que poons que, pour honneur et reverence de nostre benoit Createur, veulliés ceste nostre presente responce avoir agreable, en aiant pasience." "Venerable et religieux en Dieu, ... escripvons pardevers vous, advertissant comment par pluseurs sommes informés que tres hauls princes et princesse le duc de Bourgoingne, madame sa femme et mons. de Charolois, leur filz, sont tres grandement indignés sur ceste ville, à cause de certains injurieux parlers par aucuns d'icelle proferés touchant leurs personnes; sur quoy vous advertissons que cestedite ville est desdis parlers amerement dolente, et ne veult les delinquans en riens advoer; ainschois sont tous les encoulpés que l'on a peu trouver apprehendés, et sommes d'iceux au deseur, pour en faire telle pugnicion qu'il appartenra." "Vous plaise à ce tenir la main que puissons apaisier le couroux de mondit seigneur de Charolois, en recouvrant l'amour de lui: en quoy, aveuc ce que ferés oeuvre meritoire à Dieu, nous ferés tres singuler plaisir, dont à tosjours vorons avoir memore, pour le recognoistre à nos possibilites." "Soions tant dolens et desplaisans que plus ne poons, et ne volons les delinquans en riens advoer, ainschois tous les coulpables de ce que l'en a peu trouver soient apprehendés, pour en faire telles pugnicions et execucions qu'il plaira à leurs tres excellentes graces."

[41] "Vous petis voisins et marchissans." The phrase is expressive, though not translatable.

to be apprehended as many of them as could be found, and now holds them in durance, awaiting such sentence and such punishment as your most noble grace may be pleased to decree; wherefore your petitioners, as cordially and affectionately as they can, do beseech your most noble and excellent grace that, for the love of God, you will be pleased to suffer your anger to be appeased, holding the generality of the people of the said town of Dinant excused, and resting satisfied with the punishment of the guilty, inasmuch as the said people are bitterly grieved on account of the said injurious words, and have, as before stated, apprehended the persons of the culprits. And, in respect to any further offence or failure of duty, by which the people of the said town have incurred your grace's displeasure, in making war upon the territory of your grace's father, the most excellent, high and puissant prince, my lord the Duke of Burgundy, may it now please your grace to cause hostilities to cease, and to admit the said town to terms of peace along with the city of Liége and the other towns, accepting from it such offers, indemnifications, and promises of obedience as his grace the Duke of Burgundy may be pleased to accept from them; and in so doing your grace will do well and charitably, and your said poor and humble petitioners will ever pray to God for you and for your most noble lineage."[42]

These entreaties, piteous and even abject in their tone, were received only with a cold and disdainful silence. The intercessions of the abbots and other friendly envoys, who had followed the movements of the army, and attended the morning and evening receptions of the

[42] Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. pp. 254, 255.

Burgundian leader,[43] proved equally ineffectual. One after another they returned, bringing with them no word of encouragement or hope.[44] The nobles in the camp speedily wearied of a suit in which their zeal, it is probable, had never been very ardent or sincere, or which had perhaps been undertaken with the mere object of extorting money; and some of them were even base enough to make prisoners of the agents sent to them by the town, despoiling them of their property and exacting a pledge of ransom before their release.[45]

In its extremity, Dinant turned a beseeching glance upon the ally by whom it had already been deserted and deceived. An embassy was sent to the French monarch, to remind him that the war had been undertaken at his solicitation and in full reliance on his royal word that he would make no separate treaty with the common enemy. Subsequently he had by his own letters and by the declarations of his messengers informed the people of Dinant that they were embraced in the treaty which he had found it necessary to conclude; and he had required them to abstain from further acts of hostility. This course they had hastened to adopt; and, notwithstanding the provocations they had since received, they had scrupulously adhered to it. They had also offered repa-

[43] "En alant à couchier et lever dudit tres excellent prince, icelle solicitant." Ibid., p. 253.

[44] "Retournont messire l'abbé de Florine, sez famillez et Haroy, lesquelx n'ont rien besoingniet." "Noble et honnouré damoisiau Loys de la Marche, habandonnant . . . . de labourer envers monseigneur de Charolois," &c. Ibid., pp. 263, 268.

[45] "Non obstant que, par noz lettres précedentez, voz avons escript que Jehan de Meurse, seigneur de Harse, les avoit fait tres grant avancement et plaisir, entendons presentement audit Haroy que lui misme, avec autres, lez a prins prisonnier, hostant au pater et audit Haroy leurs chevaulx, et avec ce est ledit pater ranchonné a ung marc d'argent." Lettre des Dinantais à leurs députés à Liége.

ration for whatever offences they had committed against the Duke of Burgundy and his son. But, far from having effected an arrangement upon this basis, they had not even been able to obtain a safe-conduct for the representatives to whom they had intrusted the negotiation. On the contrary, they had received intelligence, confirmed daily by fresh reports, that their town would in a short time be assailed by an irresistible force. Since, then, after God, his "royal majesty" was their only hope and refuge, they most earnestly besought him, in consideration of the ancient friendship and singular affection which, from a time beyond the memory of man, they had always shown for the crown of France, —or even from *mere charity and pity*,—to interest himself in their behalf, so that the princes of Burgundy might be induced, out of regard and respect for his most noble person, to pardon the injuries they had received, or at least to accept the proffered amends as the conditions of peace.[46]

It does not appear that Louis took the least notice of this appeal—that he either replied to it or acted upon it. In fact, any intervention of the kind suggested would, at the moment, have been extremely inconvenient. The sacrifice of Liége and of Dinant was the price he must pay for the recovery of Normandy. In a military point of view it served the purpose of a diversion, keeping the strongest and most resolute of his enemies at a distance, and placing the weakest and least capable at his mercy. In the way of diplomacy, what plea could he advance against the proceedings of his cousin of Charolais that would not be retorted with tenfold force against his own? Moreover, his hands were in a manner tied by

[46] Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. pp. 280-282.

his newly formed alliance with the Duke of Bourbon. It was the brother of this prince, the Bishop of Liége, whose cause the house of Burgundy was supporting against his rebellious subjects.

The only hope now left was that the other towns would remain true, refusing to accept a treaty from which Dinant was excluded. Assurances to this effect were daily received.[47] When, therefore, rumour, anticipating the fact, asserted that a treaty of this kind had actually been signed, the despair and rage of the people broke forth with irrepressible violence. The prisons were forced, and the persons whose folly had brought such heavy calamities on the town were again liberated. Yet, after this first burst of desperation, the magistrates, whose conduct throughout a long period of trials and perplexities claims our admiration, once more succeeded in restoring order and in recalling their fellow-townsmen to that prudent line of conduct in which lay their only chance of redemption.[48] The difficulties, however, of their situation were becoming daily more complicated. The town was filled with strangers. The "Companions of the Green Tent" and other proscribed exiles, rightly

[47] These assurances were continued after the treaty had been actually ratified at Liége. (Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. pp. 313, 318, et al.) The explanation of this fact is to be found in the peculiar complications then existing. Under the pressure of necessity the people of the capital had consented to the treaty, and its action was apparently controlled by the moderate party. But the government elected at an earlier period, and composed of the heads, or, more properly, of the tools of the revolutionary faction, were still in office. Their signatures had been affixed to the "Piteous Peace," but they had no intention of executing its conditions. It was only necessary to remind the people that their confederates had been deserted or betrayed to reawaken the spirit of resistance. Accordingly, on the 21st of January, the very day on which the treaty was signed by the Count of Charolais, a popular assembly was held at Liége, and a resolve passed to make common cause with Dinant. (Ibid., p. 323.)

[48] Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. pp. 283, 284.

discerning in the re-establishment of the episcopal authority under the avowed protection of the house of Burgundy their own sentence of extermination, now flocked to Dinant,[49] which, from the circumstance of its equal peril, had become the asylum of these outcasts, and was still further compromised by their presence.

At the last moment, when the Count of Charolais was on the point of quitting the principality, he deigned to cast an eye upon the kneeling supplicants at his feet. He granted Dinant a truce of eight days, afterwards extended to May, 1466; and in the interval it was presented with the project of a treaty specifying the conditions on which it might expect mercy. This fact, unnoticed by any contemporary historian, is established beyond a doubt by several documents in the series to which allusion has been already made. Unfortunately, we are left in complete ignorance as to the nature of the requisitions. They are described in a letter of the magistrates as "excessively stringent, and indeed almost impossible to execute."[50] Compliance with them was regarded by the people as involving "perpetual servitude." Such expressions do not seem applicable to the imposition of a fine, however large, or to a demand for the surrender of the persons most obnoxious to the house of Burgundy—suggested by some writers as the probable grounds on which the treaty was rejected.[51]

[49] Adrianus de Veteri-Bosco, Ampliss. Col., tom. iv. p. 1292.

[50] Lettre des Dinantais à Louis XI., Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. p. 337.

[51] Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. p. 337, note.—Borgnet, Sac de Dinant, p. 20.—Michelet, while adopting the conjecture of Gachard, perceives, nevertheless, that the question was debated as one in which the communal liberties were concerned. "Justice devait se faire. Mais pouvait-elle se faire par un souverain étranger, à qui la ville eût livré, non les prisonniers seulement, mais elle-même, son plus précieux droit, son épée de justice?" (Hist. de France, tom. vi. p. 202.) But nothing can be more explicit than

Doubtless it contained stipulations on both these points; but Dinant, as we have seen, had itself offered to leave to the Burgundian princes the punishment of their defamers; and the payment of an enormous sum by way of indemnification had formed one of the conditions of the "Piteous Peace," which Liége had accepted, and to which Dinant would most gladly have been a party. To us it seems more probable that the rulers of the Netherlands, following their invariable practice in the treatment of their own rebellious towns, demanded the surrender of the municipal charters of Dinant, and such a modification of its privileges as should deprive the mass of the inhabitants of any voice in the government. It appears that the wealthier classes — the *bourgeois* and the great guild—were willing to accept the treaty, while it was strenuously opposed by the inferior guilds. The case would probably have been reversed had the levy of a fine—in other words, an augmentation of the taxes—given occasion for the disagreement; whereas, if we suppose the extinction of the democratic element in the political system to have been the penalty imposed, it was perfectly natural that the resistance should have been confined to the lower classes, on whom alone a penalty of this nature would have fallen, while it is difficult to conceive how a penalty of any other nature should have fallen on them alone. The Burgundian princes had been entreated to content themselves with the punishment of the guilty; it was by the lower orders, or by a portion of them,

the offer of the municipal government — comprising members chosen from each of the three classes that formed the community — to deliver up the offenders: "Trouvons à conseil d'envoier envers lesdis princes eulx notifiant et *habandonnant* desdis delinquans faire telle pugnicion que leur plaira."

that the offence had been committed; and it is at least certain that they were the chief, if not the exclusive objects of the intended chastisement. For we find their fellow-townsmen, in the discussions which took place, deprecating the idea that they were influenced, in their support of the treaty, by any advantages which they might themselves expect to derive from it. They do not deny the sacrifice which it entails. But is it not better, they ask, to submit to a partial and definite sacrifice than to incur the hazard of total destruction? If a ship be in danger of wreck, shall we not throw over the cargo? If a house be on fire, shall we not destroy a part to save the remainder? What oppression can be worse than the continuance of a hopeless struggle? By what other means is it possible to evade the impending calamities? How is Dinant to resist a power to which Liége has submitted —to which the King of France himself has been obliged to succumb? If it be contended that one portion of the people ought not to aid in reducing the others to subjection, still less ought any portion to insist upon bringing absolute ruin upon all.[52] April 22, 1466.

[52] Lettre de la bourgeoisie et du métier des batteurs de Dinant, touchant le dissentiment existant entre eux et les neuf bons métiers, Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. pp. 363-369.

"Cette lettre," remarks the editor, "est la dernière pièce contenue dans le registre de Dinant. Il est fâcheux que l'on n'ait point les actes postérieurs, jusqu'à la destruction de la ville." But an extract which he proceeds to cite from an earlier letter suggests a reason for his having failed to discover any later documents of the kind, and, in connection with other facts, renders it extremely doubtful whether any regular government was maintained in Dinant during the last few months of its existence. "Nous faisons grans doubtes que ne puissons estre maistres du grant nombre d'estraingiers qui sont icy soubz umbre d'estre envoyés de par la cité pour la garde de la ville, dont entendons que les pluseurs sont expulsés et bannis tant de ladite cité, comme bonne ville de Huy, pour leurs demerittes, et ne sont pas envoyés par election, non obstant que soient ausi grant nombre ou plus que les esleus."

But, whatever were the terms on which grace was offered, neither these arguments in their favour, nor the will of the majority of the citizens, to which, on ordinary occasions, that of the minority must have yielded, were sufficient, in the present crisis, to secure their acceptance. The outlawed bands who had made Dinant their head-quarters incited the populace to continued resistance and to fresh outbreaks. The authority of the magistrates was completely set aside. In the capital the revolutionary party had long since recovered its ascendency. As soon as the Burgundian army had taken its departure the demagogues crept from their hiding-places, again assembled their myrmidons around them, and, with baseness and cruelty characteristic of coward minds, impeached and put to death the persons by whom the treaty had been negotiated, on the false and idle pretext that they had exceeded their instructions.[53]

The towns now entered into a new alliance for mutual defence;[54] and, in spite of their past experience, they confidently imagined that they should receive support and assistance from the French king. Louis might well, in fact, have been expected to strike a blow on their be-

[53] Adrianus de Veteri-Bosco, Ampliss. Col., tom. iv. p. 1285, et al.—Johannes de Los, p. 36.—Polain, Hist. de Liége, tom. ii. p. 304, et seq.—On the scaffold Gilles de Metz invoked the compassion of the people, reminding them of his long services and gray hairs, offering to retire to a monastery, to give up his property, &c. His appeal was seconded by the *avoué* (an officer whose duties somewhat resembled those of a sheriff); but Raes de Heers, who sat at a window overlooking the square, was seen to smile, and one of the burgomasters calling out that "the city did not *sell* its liberties," the victim perceived the fruitlessness of his prayers, and submitted to the stroke.

[54] De Ram, Analecta Leodiensia, p. 557, et seq.—The instrument recapitulates the sentence passed on Gilles de Metz and his associates, which is chiefly based on their acceptance of a treaty excluding Dinant. Yet that treaty had been ratified by the solemn vote of Liége.

half. Normandy had been regained; a great army was assembled on the frontiers. But, having thus achieved a triumph and secured his new position, he could not bring himself to plunge at once into fresh perils for the mere sake of his allies. The effect, indeed, of the measures by which he had retrieved his own safety, was to increase the certainty of their ruin. By the seizure of Normandy he had excited to its highest pitch the wrath of the Count of Charolais; and by the precautions which he had taken he had averted from his own head the consequences of that wrath. So much the heavier would it fall upon his allies. Retiring from the Somme, where he had found himself confronted by a foe who was unassailable, the Burgundian prince turned his arms against one who was all but defenceless—vowing so to consummate his vengeance that it should be no longer said, on the borders of the Meuse, "There is Dinant," but—"There Dinant *was!*"

CHAPTER IX.

FATE OF DINANT. — SUBMISSION OF LIÉGE. — DEATH OF PHILIP THE GOOD.

1466, 1467.

CHANGE was impending over the vassals of the house of Burgundy; its approaches were visible, its influence was already felt. A long period of tranquillity, interrupted only by civic mutiny or the excitement of a border raid, had reached its close. Twice in a single year had the nobles been summoned to the field; and now, after an interval of a few months, they were again commanded, under pain of death and confiscation, to assemble in arms with their servants and retainers. A new spirit, a stern and martial spirit, impatient of festive ease and idle shows, had taken possession of the government and begun to direct its policy. Adieu the halcyon days of peace and pomp, of idleness and luxury, that had given to the sovereign under whom they had been enjoyed the title of "the Good!"

Philip's reign, which had now lasted forty-seven years, was drawing to its end. It was a reign regarded by his subjects as full of glory. Among the princes of his time none had occupied so conspicuous an eminence as the "Great Duke of the Occident." Golden pens had celebrated his power and his magnificence, his triumphs over the proud, his generosity to the vanquished. Touched with pity for distracted France, he had listened to her supplications, and sheathed his

victorious sword. He had paid the ransom of the Duke of Orleans, the son of his father's enemy, rescued him from his captivity in England, and lavished on him marks of favour and distinction. He had given shelter to the exiled son of France, nourished him in his indigence, and led him to the throne. He had added nine provinces to his inherited dominions. His fleets had traversed the Mediterranean, spreading fear among the enemies of Christendom. He had heaped together a priceless treasure, yet no prince had been so profuse in gifts or expenditure. Thrice he had refused the office of emperor, and more than once the title of king. He had restored the fading splendours of chivalry, and had founded an order of knighthood which was an object of aspiration to the proudest nobles of every land. His person and character had been in harmony with his position, had fitted him for the first part in dazzling and imposing scenes—at the banquet, in the tourney, and on the dais of the hall of state.[1]

But all this belonged to the past. Philip no longer appeared before the eyes of his subjects as the living personification of the princely character; the world no longer moved by the direction of his imperious will. Enfeebled in body and mind by successive attacks of apoplexy, he had gradually become incapable of exercising the real functions of sovereignty, though he still retained the semblance of authority, and was still at times roused from the sluggishness of disease into one of those vehement bursts of passion to which he had ever been subject in even a greater degree than the other princes of his line.

Sitting, one day, at dinner, in the beginning of July,

[1] See the enumeration of his "glories" in the Éloge of Chastellain.

1466, he was displeased that a favourite dish had not been set before him. Ordering the comptrollers of his household to be summoned, he inquired the cause of this omission, and was told, in reply, that it was in accordance with directions given by his physicians, Turning to some noblemen who were present, he asked whether the troops had assembled that had been levied for the expedition against Dinant. The answer was that as yet there were no signs of warlike preparation; that, during the last campaign, the men-at-arms had received only a part of their pay, and that many of the nobles were too much impoverished to furnish the equipments necessary for their followers. "And why have these not been supplied?" demanded the duke. "I have given orders on my treasury for the requisite sums. Are my commands no longer obeyed? *Am I, then, forgotten?*" Rising, as his anger reached its climax, he overthrew the table, with the service that had provoked his discontent, and seemed about to seek some fresh object on which to vent his wrath. But the next moment he fell senseless on the floor, his limbs paralyzed, his features distorted. The efforts made for his restoration were, however, successful; and, after a short confinement, he again left his chamber.[2]

From this near interview with Death he came back to the world, his faculties still further shattered, but one recollection, one purpose, engraven more deeply than ever on his mind. The crimes of Dinant were still unpunished; an unforgiven, inexpiable insult was to be wiped out before the expiration of the brief term for which his lease of life had been extended. He resolved to be present in person at the execution of this act—

[2] Duclercq, tom. iv. p. 261.

the last in which his name was to figure before the world. Before setting out he caused the papal bull by which sentence of excommunication had been issued against the people of Liége, and in which he himself was invited to aid in reducing them to submission, to be affixed to the gates of the principal towns. With this sanction on his enterprise, what earthly power would dare to interpose and prevent its accomplishment?

Philip performed the journey in a litter drawn by horses. On the 14th of August he arrived at Namur, which, from the convenience of its position, had been appointed as the place where the army was to muster. All the chiefs who had served in the previous campaign again made their appearance, having forgotten their grievances on learning that their sovereign, for whom their loyal affection was unbounded, was to take the field in person. Even Saint-Pol, whose relations with the Count of Charolais had begun to assume a dubious aspect, and who, as constable of France, should have been in attendance on the king while the latter was himself engaged in military operations, did not deem it proper to plead this excuse on an occasion that so closely concerned the honour of the prince who was the first and the nearest object of his allegiance.

The Count of Charolais having assumed the command, the army began its march. Crossing the Meuse at Namur, it continued its course up the right bank of the stream, the side on which lay the object of its destination. In the mean time, Philip, attended only by a small escort, pursued his journey along the opposite shore until he reached Bouvignes, a station from which

he could command an ample view of the intended operations.[3]

Dinant lay before him. Its streets, still alive with the bustle of an industrious people, were fully exposed to his gaze; the very clang of its ponderous hammers, wielded by stalwart arms, fell loud upon his ear; the smoke from hundreds of hearths—hearths where women, anxious, trembling, it might be, were still occupied with the cares that belong to every day of human existence, however sad, however awful—curled upwards in his sight towards the overshadowing cliff, towards the overarching heaven. Thither doubtless, too, unseen, unheard by him, rose the tearful gaze of many eyes, the forlorn prayer of many hearts—hearts that had proved the falsity of human faith, eyes that were no longer strained in the vain expectation of human succour.

But the aspect of the place awakened no sentiment of pity in Philip's breast. In his eyes it was a nest of rebels and fanatics, who had braved his power, outraged his person, and slighted his proffered grace. His dignity, his authority, his honour were to be asserted and vindicated. His career had opened in vengeance; in vengeance it was to close.

In fact, those among the people of Dinant—and doubtless they were the larger number of its ordinary residents—who were fully awake to their peril, and who would have chosen to throw themselves upon the mercy of so powerful an enemy rather than provoke him still further by a useless resistance, no longer dared to make an open avowal of their wishes. The outlaws, themselves an army, well provided with weapons,

[3] Duclercq, tom. iv. pp. 266-268.—Haynin, tom. i. pp. 66, 67.

accustomed to live by violence, and regularly organized in bands under different leaders, had taken complete possession of the town, and, supported by the lower orders of the populace, established a government of terror like that which again reigned in the capital. By vain-confident boasts, by acts of desperate atrocity, they silenced the murmurs of dissent within the walls, and imagined that by the same means they could intimidate the enemy without. Several of the chief citizens, who had counselled submission to the demands of the enemy, were publicly executed. Priests, for refusing to say mass, were thrown into the river. Bouvignes, alarmed at the prospect of being occupied by the besieging army, living at free quarters among the inhabitants, is said to have proffered its mediation. But its messenger was instantly put to death; and a child, whose tender years and innocent looks were thought to ensure him against harm, being made the bearer of a second letter of the like purport, was, if the frightful tale be true, torn limb from limb by the frenzied rabble.[4]

Had the real courage of these desperadoes been in any degree proportioned to their violence and cruelty, it seems as if Dinant should at least have been capable of a stout and protracted defence. The art of siege was still in its infancy. It was not uncommon even for a small town to baffle all the efforts of a numerous and well-appointed army; and more than one instance of the kind will occur in the course of our narrative. Dinant was regarded as a place of extraordinary strength.[5] According to the tradition, it had been

[4] Duclercq, tom. iv. p. 273.

[5] "Oppidum munitissimum, accessu difficile, aspectu inexpugnabile; vastissimis moenibus in gyro circumdatum,

many times assaulted, but was still a virgin fortress. On one side ran a deep and rapid river; on the other it was protected by a wall nine feet thick, flanked by eighty towers. But its self-constituted garrison trusted much less to their own exertions, or even to the strength of the defences, than to the assistance which had been promised from abroad, or which, in default of promises, they still chose to expect. The King of France would himself march to their relief. Liége was about to send out an army of forty thousand men to raise the siege. Vaunts and illusions like these seem to have taken the place of any serious preparations for resistance.

On the morning of the 17th the advanced guard of the Burgundians made its apearance before Dinant, and, after some skirmishing, drove in a party that had sallied out to contest the ground. The main body followed as rapidly as the transport of the artillery, which was unusually strong, would allow. The long train of waggons, extending over several leagues of road, was escorted by the heavy-armed cavalry in two wings, while the archers, as usual, were in the van. The whole force amounted in number to thirty thousand men. Various banners were displayed amongst the feudal bands that constituted this formidable host; but conspicuous among them all was the sable standard of the Count of Charolais with its gold-embroidered effigy of Saint George in the act of transfixing the dragon.[6]

The investment, so far as was considered necessary, was completed without delay. The faubourgs, includ-

et hinc Mosa fluvio, illinc vero excelsis rupibus forti obsidione vallatum." Henricus de Merica, De Bam, p. 159.

[6] Duclercq, tom. iv. pp. 268-270.—Haynin, tom. i. p. 68.

ing several strong outworks, were stormed, with little loss on the part of the assailants.[7] The greater portion of the army was kept in reserve, to give battle to the people of Liége, who, according to rumour, were already on the march; but the celerity with which the siege was opened showed the determination of the Burgundian prince to lose no chance of bringing it to a conclusion before any succour could arrive. As the modern method of approaching fortified places by means of trenched zigzags and parallels had not come into use, it was customary for the assailants to take advantage of the obscurity of night in establishing their batteries. But, on the present occasion, this precaution was disregarded by the officer in command of the artillery—Peter von Hagenbach, an Alsatian noble and a soldier of fortune, whose vigour and resolution strongly recommended him to the favour of a commander personally so distinguished for these qualities, and obtained for him ultimately a place in Charles's confidence productive of fatal consequences to both. Ordering the field-pieces to be advanced as close as possible to the walls, Hagenbach, under cover of their fire, brought up the "bombards," as the siege ordnance were called, leading the foremost horse with his own hand, and succeeded in getting them into position in broad daylight.[8]

This operation having been completed, the usual

[7] Lettre du Comte de Charolais aux magistrats de Malines, Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. p. 374.—Haynin, tom. i. p. 69.

[8] "Il avoit afusté sa menue artillerie, dont il avoit grand planté, devant les portes et la muraille de Dinand, et quand il approcha a tout ses bombardes, le trait à pouldre veloit si dru, que ceux de la ville n'osoyent mettre la teste hors des portes ne des murailles, et ainsy approcha ses bombardes et mena le premier cheval par la bride." Lamarche, tom. ii. p. 257.

summons was delivered on the same afternoon. It was received by the besieged, or by that portion of them to whose insane direction the miserable town was now abandoned, with shouts of derision. Crowding the walls, they hurled defiance and every species of insult at such parties of the enemy as were stationed near the gates. "Is your old puppet of a duke," they cried, "weary of his life, that you have brought him here to die a villain's death? Your Count *Charlotel* is but a green fledgling. Bid him go and fight with the King of France at Montlhéry. If he wait here till the noble Louis comes, or the people of Liége, he will be forced to decamp right villanously." [9]

Tuesday, Aug. 19.

These taunts and empty boasts were answered by the roar of the artillery, which now opened from different quarters, from the heights that overlooked the town and from convenient positions in the faubourgs. Never had so heavy and so effective a cannonade been directed against a fortified place. Except for a brief interval during the thickest darkness of the night, the fire was kept up without intermission. It seemed to the inhabitants of Dinant that their town had become a very hell.[10] The houses were riddled, the churches dismantled of their towers; more than seven hundred persons were reported to have been killed; and, by the end of the week, a breach sixty feet long had been opened in the wall.

On the part of the defenders the struggle seems to

[9] Duclercq, tom. iv. p. 272.—"Plusieurs aultres villaines parolles, qui trop longues seroient a racompter, disoient de jour en jour."

[10] Duclercq, tom. iv. p. 274.—Ancien Chronique, Lenglet, tom. ii. p. 187.

have been confined to a feeble fire from the walls and a few ineffectual sorties.[11] Stunned by the suddenness and overwhelming force of the attack, the self-constituted garrison abandoned all notion of resistance, and now thought only of making good their own retreat. The fate of Dinant mattered little to them—little when they swarmed upon it, ensuring and accelerating its ruin; little when they deserted it in the hour of its greatest need, and, like scared birds of prey, winged their flight towards the distant forest.[12] For these vagrants, encumbered only with their arms and banners, escape was easy, the passage of the river above the town being left unguarded by the enemy. But those who had their families and property to protect must stay and abide the issue, ready to grasp at any chance of saving the homes which even when despoiled would still be dear to them, and without which even life and liberty would cease to be precious.

Relieved of the presence of their pretended allies, the citizens had now the power and the responsibility of deciding upon their own course of action. Already, on the 22nd, they had offered to capitulate, and requested that negotiations might be opened. But this proposal was answered by a brief and stern refusal; they

[11] "Les Dinantois firent deux ou trois petites saillies au plain de la montaigne sans aucun effet." Haynin, tom. i. p. 69.—And see Commines, tom. i. p. 116.

M. Borgnet, indeed, after noticing the vigour of the besiegers, says, "La défense n'etait pas moins vive. Dès que les assiégés trouvaient le moment de se faire entendre des Bourguignons, ils leur criaient des injures." The latter statement will hardly be accepted as confirmation of the former—in support of which, however, nothing further is adduced, or *can* be adduced from any of the authorities.

[12] "Ad latrocinia fortes, ad prœlia pavidi," is the description given of them by Foullon, one of the native historians of Liége; and M. Borgnet, who cites the remark, should have found some better ground for disputing its applicability than their conduct in the defence of Dinant.

must surrender at discretion or endure the consequences. On Saturday the fire from the batteries was suspended; and the Count of Charolais decided to make the assault on Sunday. Philip, however, doubting whether the breach were yet practicable, and anxious that no unnecessary risk should be encountered, desired that it might be deferred to the following day. On Monday, therefore, the firing was resumed and continued for several hours. Then it again ceased. All was still. Instead of the usual summons by the trumpet-call, the orders of the general were passed by word of mouth from rank to rank. The soldiers, each provided with a faggot to throw into the ditch, made their preparations for the attack.[13]

In the mean time the magistrates had convened all the inhabitants, and called for a decision on the only alternative presented for their choice. There seemed little room for discussion. If the place were stormed, the horrible result was certain. Hope whispered that, even at this hour, submission would avail to obtain some mitigation of their doom. "The duke," it was said, "has ever been reputed a merciful prince; an appeal to his compassion will not be made in vain." A solitary voice opposed this delusive expectation. John de Gerin, the dean of the great guild, and a former burgomaster of the town, taking in his hand the civic standard, cried out, "I will trust to no man's mercy. I am ready to take this standard to the breach, and there to live or die with you; but, if you determine to surrender, I will quit the town before the enemy enters it." [14]

Applause followed, such as men readily yield to an

[13] Duclercq, tom. iv. pp. 275, 276. —Haynin, tom. i. p. 70.

[14] Adrianus de Veteri-Bosco, Ampliss. Col., tom. iv. p. 1294.

heroic sentiment that has no influence upon their own course of action. Nor, in truth, can we greatly wonder that the citizens of Dinant should have failed to exhibit that instinctive spirit of valour and resolve which the present occasion ought to have called forth—that spirit which has so often enabled a desperate people to maintain a post regarded as untenable against a foe supposed to be irresistible. Their spirit had been broken, and they had been utterly disorganized, in the crisis through which they had passed—in the long and vain endeavour to escape from a labyrinth into which they had been dragged against their will, and to hinder or suppress the violence which they were now condemned to expiate.

In season to avert the meditated assault the keys of the town were carried to the Count of Charolais. As a matter of form he declined to receive them before communicating with his father and obtaining his consent. Late in the evening the Bastard of Burgundy was directed to take possession of the conquered place with the troops under his command, and to garrison the citadel. Orders were issued that no violence should be offered to the persons or the property of the inhabitants, and that they should only be required to furnish the necessary provisions for the men. During the first few hours these injunctions were obeyed. But at midnight the soldiers, inflamed probably by wine as well as by the prospect of a richer harvest than they might expect to reap when their comrades had been admitted to share it with them, could no longer be restrained by the bonds of discipline. The work of rapine was commenced, and continued throughout the night.[15]

[15] "Ceux qui y entrarent y furent gratieux et paisibles jusques à minuict, mais après commencèrent à battre et rompre les huys, coffres, escrins, et piller tout." Haynin, tom. i. p. 70.

It was stopped, however, on Tuesday, at noon, when the Count of Charolais made his entrance, preceded by drums and trumpets, by long files of archers in brilliant uniforms, by heralds dressed in the quaint garb that indicated their office, and by mounted troopers carrying the banners on which were emblazoned the insignia of the different states subject to the house of Burgundy. Behind came the pages of the household, the principal nobles, and the deep squadrons of the men-at-arms, that constituted the bulk and principal strength of the army.[16] The inhabitants, who gazed with anxiety and awe on this imposing display of military force,—far superior to what their information had prepared them to expect,—saw nothing in the spectacle, or in the stern glance and haughty bearing of the conquerors, to encourage the faint hopes that still glimmered in their hearts.[17]

It is one of the prerogatives of power, when legitimate in form, however arbitrary in its character, that it is able to clothe revenge in the solemn garb of justice. That Dinant should have surrendered at discretion instead of being carried by assault, seemed to afford the Burgundian princes an opportunity of accomplishing their object in so formal and deliberate a manner as

[16] Idem, p. 71.—Adrianus de Veteri-Bosco, Ampliss. Col., tom. iv. p. 1295.—The "mimi" spoken of by Adrianus as taking part in the procession are supposed by Michelet to have been the court jesters or professional buffoons—"fols et farceurs d'office, qui jouaient leur rôle aux actes les plus graves, traités, prises de possession." This notion is ridiculed by Borgnet, who thinks it more probable that an allusion was intended—"dans une intention évidement désobligeante"—to the coats of arms worn by the heralds! Allegorical exhibitions and performances—serious, however, rather than comic—were certainly not unusual in ovations and other public ceremonies.

[17] "Ceux de la ville voyantz ceste entrée furent fort esbahys, et pensoient qu'il n'y avoit plus de gens au monde, et commencèrent aupremes à cognoistre la puissance du duc de Bourgogne, laquelle ils avoient jusques lors vilipendé." Haynin, tom. i. p. 71.

might render the example more impressive, and give to the world a convincing proof of their greatness and authority. At a council of war held on the morning of the 27th (Wednesday) the programme of the intended proceedings was discussed and arranged. But the impatience of the troops would not allow of its being carried out in all its particulars in the order and with the formalities intended. On the same day, after dinner, every man, on rising from table, laid hands on the host with whom he was billeted, and threatened him with instant death unless he revealed the place where his most valuable possessions were concealed.[18] From that hour the town presented the same aspect as if it had been taken by storm. During three days the sack was carried on with a systematic thoroughness that might have done credit to the *Écorcheurs* of an earlier period. Every house, every apartment, in regular turn, was visited and ransacked. Even the roofs were invaded, and stripped of the lead then commonly used as a covering for the better class of buildings. The streets were filled with horses and with vehicles of every description engaged in carrying away the booty to places of security beyond the walls. The river was covered with boats and small vessels employed in a similar manner.[19] Often what had been taken from the enemy became an object of contention with the captors. Some were slain in defending their prizes, others in attempting to despoil

[18] Adrianus de Veteri-Bosco, Ampliss. Col., tom. iv. p. 1295.

[19] "Le mardy, le mercredy et le jeudy on ne feit que butiner, et estoit toute la riviere de Meuse pleine de basteaux pleins de biens que on vuidoit de la ville, et sy ne veit on touts les jours que chars, charettes, chevaulx, tonneaulx, brouettes, chargiés de biens qu'on emportoit hors de la ville, et hommes a pieds et a cheval chargiés de biens, car il y avoit tant de biens, et se y avoit tant de vivres que merveilles, et disoit on qu'ils estoient garnis de vivres pour trois ans." Duclercq, tom. iv. p. 27.

their more fortunate comrades. Several of the nobles, gifted, it would seem, with a peculiar instinct for operations of this kind, instead of joining in the general rapine, stationed themselves, with their retainers, near the breach, and, whenever a party inferior in strength sought egress with their plunder, ravished it from them and drove them empty-handed from the spot.[20]

Amidst these scenes of tumult and disorder, the Burgundian commander still retained, to a remarkable extent, that control over his men which had been acquired by the exercise of a rigorous and invariable discipline. He issued a proclamation that any outrages to women—a species of crime which he seems ever to have held in peculiar abhorrence—would be punished with death, whatever might be the rank of the offenders. To enforce obedience in this particular, he stationed sentinels at every door; and, being informed that three archers of his own guard were dragging away the wife of a citizen towards the cliffs, he caused them to be arrested, led thrice through the principal streets, and then gibbeted in a conspicuous situation.[21]

But, while he showed himself thus solicitous and vigilant in preserving the women of Dinant from dishonour, Charles was exacting vengeance for the infamies cast upon his own name and his mother's reputation, in a spirit of remorseless cruelty characteristic indeed of the age, but pre-eminently characteristic of himself. It is not at all certain—it is even highly improbable—that, among the persons who suffered, any considerable number had joined in the perpetration of the excesses

[20] Idem, loc. cit.

[21] Lamarche, tom. ii. p. 258.—Basin, tom. ii. p. 171.—Duclercq, tom. iv. p. 278.—"Car le comte aussi avoit juré, que touts ceulx qui violeroient femmes, fuissent nobles ou non nobles, qu'il les feroit mourir."

that furnished the apology—such as it was—for these terrible reprisals. Those who were conscious of having merited or provoked castigation had doubtless been the first to avail themselves of the opportunity for escape.[22] But, besides some of the women of the place who were compelled to give evidence, the people of Bouvignes were called to testify against their hereditary foes, and did not apparently show themselves too nice in the detection and identification of the guilty. How many victims composed the holocaust offered to the offended honour of the house of Burgundy cannot be stated with precision. But we have the assertion of an impartial eye-witness—whose recollection alone can have been at fault, if he has fallen into an exaggeration—that eight hundred men were bound hand and foot, tied together in pairs, and thrown into the Meuse.[23] This was no uncommon mode of punishment, and may have been selected in this instance, and executed on this extraordinary scale, in order that the duke, who had been dissuaded from making his personal appearance on a scene where his presence would have been construed as a token of intended grace,[24] might not want the gratification of beholding a tragedy of which he was regarded as the author. Besides these unfortunates, some were hanged by the orders of the general, and others butchered in wanton fury by the soldiery.[25] Yet

[22] "Luebant innoxii, obnoxii evadebant." Henricus de Merica, De Ram, p. 159.

[23] Commines, tom. i. p. 117.—He adds that it was done "à la grande requeste de ceulx dudict Bouvynes"—an expression not perhaps to be taken literally, but calculated to strengthen the impression left by the statements of other writers in regard to the eagerness with which these personal enemies of Dinant pandered to the revengeful appetite of its conquerors.

[24] "Il lui fust conseillié de non y entrer puisque sa vollonté estoit de la destruire." Duclercq, tom. iv. p. 277.

[25] Henricus de Merica, De Ram, p. 159.

the temper of the commander, though stern and unpitying, did not lead him to sanction indiscriminate massacre; and, as no resistance seems to have been attempted by the inhabitants, the slaughter was probably not so great as often accompanied the sack of a captured city.[26]

At every step in these transactions, indeed, the Count of Charolais showed an inclination to draw the line between the blind fury common on such occasions, and what he himself considered as strict retribution. By the usages of war the inhabitants of Dinant were all captives. Their persons, as well as their pro-

[26] M. Borgnet rejects as improbable the statement of Commines, that 800 persons were put to death. Commines, he remarks, "wrote with the avowed intention of exalting Louis XI. at the expense of his impetuous rival," and cannot therefore be considered as a trustworthy guide; and he also endeavours to show that the statement in question is not merely unsupported by, but at variance with, the accounts given by other writers. He adduces, in proof of this, an expression employed by Haynin, who, after telling that a few individuals, "chiefs of the rebellion," were hanged, adds, "*Plusieurs* aultres complices furent noyez en Mose, les mains et les pieds liez"—a phrase considered by M. Borgnet as "far from indicating so high a figure as that of Commines." We venture, however, to dissent from the interpretation here given of the word "plusieurs," which, in the chronicles of the fifteenth century, —as, indeed, in writings of a much later date,—will always be found to retain its primitive force. A single instance, from Haynin himself, may be cited for its remarkable appropriateness. Relating a massacre on an occasion very similar to the present, he says, "On y tua *plusieurs* personnes que hommes que femmes, jeusnes et vieulx, et les ay ouy nombrer jusques à *plus de mille*." (Haynin, tom. i. p. 142.) Here we find exactly the same expression employed by the same writer to indicate a total much greater than that of Commines. Such being the case, we are ready to concur with the remark of M. Borgnet, that "the account given by Duclercq does not differ from that of Haynin." It is contained in these words: "Ces jours durant on prist plusieurs femmes pour sçavoir qui estoient les mauvais, et ceulx qui avoient dit les blasphemes du duc et son fils, lesquelles en accuserent *plusieurs*, sy feirent ceulx de Bonnynes, en accuserent aulcuns, lesquels feurent prins et jettés deux loyés ensemble en la riviere et noyés; et sy feit le comte pendre le bombardier de Dynant sur la montagne desseure l'eglise. *Touts aussy que on polvoit sçavoir qu'ils avoient esté cause de la guerre feurent jettés en la riviere.*"

perty, were placed at the absolute disposal of the victors.[27] Those whose lives were spared were to be regarded as a legitimate portion of the spoils. For every man a ransom would be fixed, the price which he must pay for the recovery of his freedom. If unable to discharge it or to furnish security for its payment, he might, if such were the pleasure of his captor, be sold into slavery. But from these penalties the women and children, and members of the ecclesiastical profession, were exempted. They were ordered to quit the town without delay. They were forbidden to take with them any effects which they might perchance have rescued from the general pillage;[28] but an escort was provided to conduct them on the road to Liége. Thither they would carry the report of what had befallen Dinant—admonitory of what Liége might expect unless it hastened to comply with the requisitions of its enemy.

It was on the morning of Thursday the 28th that proclamation was made to this effect, and the mournful exodus took place on the same afternoon. The trumpets sounded the fatal signal; the gates were thrown wide. No more heart-rending scene of human suffering was

[27] Of the coolness with which these unfortunate captives—neither pagans nor negroes—were treated and spoken of as mere chattels, things that might be sold, given away, stolen and reclaimed, the following passage may serve as an example. "Mondict sieur de Charrolois avoit donné à monsieur de Fiennes Henri de Huy [one of the richest citizens of Dinant], son hoste, son fils et l'hostel avec les biens y estants, mais ledict Henry de Huy et son fils luy furent destournez par autres, at mis hors la voye; ne sçay s'il les r'éut." Haynin, tom. i. p. 72.

[28] The count of Charolais made an exception in favour of his own hostess, the wife of a very wealthy citizen. "Donna congé à son hostesse d'emporter avec elle tout ce qu'elle puys d'argent, accoustrementz et aultres bagues quelconques. Sur quel congé elle fist oster quelques pierres du pavé de l'escalier de sa maison devant l'estable des chevaux, et y tira hors trois ou quatre sachetz pleins d'or, et les porta et fit porter avec elle." Haynin, tom. i. p. 72.

ever witnessed; and even the most cold-blooded of the spectators gazed upon the spectacle with pallid countenances. As the despairing, helpless multitude went forth,—expelled from their homes, cast destitute upon the world, torn from their friends, their protectors, their beloved, with the full certainty that they were never to meet again, with as complete uncertainty of what was to befall those whom they left behind,—there burst from them "two or three cries" so piteous and terrible that all who heard the dismal sounds were thrilled with a sudden horror.[29]

The next step in this work of ruin was precipitated, whether through accident or by some wanton act of mischief is uncertain. On the same night a fire broke out in the lodgings of the Sire de Ravenstein. When first discovered, it might without much difficulty have been extinguished. But the soldiers, roused from their drunken slumbers, gazed at it with stupid curiosity, doubtful whether to attribute it to the orders of their commander or to a special manifestation of that divine wrath which they supposed to have been long brooding over the guilty town. The doom of Dinant had indeed been pronounced, but not with the intention to carry it into effect while the place was filled with troops, the fate of the prisoners still undecided, the booty not entirely secured, and the images and sacred relics, which it would have been prodigal as well as impious to destroy, yet unremoved from the churches. On reaching the spot Charles gave directions for arresting

[29] "Lesquels femmes, petits enfants et gens d'eglise, a l'issir hors la ville, jetterent deux ou trois crys sy terribles et piteux, que touts ceulx qui le oyrent eurent pitié et horreur." Duclercq, tom. iv. p. 279.—And see Haynin, tom. i. p. 72.

the progress of the flames. But this order came too late. The soldiers worked with little zeal, or confined their efforts to the preservation of the spoils. The Hôtel de Ville, where the powder had been stored, blew up, spreading the devastation far and wide. The principal church, that of Notre Dame, was next attacked. A number of prisoners, the persons of chief consideration in the town, who had been placed for safe keeping in the massive tower of the edifice, were burned to death; but the bones of Saint Perpète, and other relics, esteemed apparently more precious than the living inmates, were rescued through the personal exertions of the general and at the imminent risk of his life.

In a few hours the conflagration had become general. There was no longer any question of disputing its march; the only thought was of escaping from this place of doom. The furious element pursued the terror-stricken fugitives "as if with talons," and many who had stayed to load themselves with their ill-gotten gain sank down scorched or suffocated.[30] Among the victims were a party of the townspeople, who, when the place was first occupied, had taken refuge in the towers of the fortifications, and, refusing every summons to surrender, had determined, but vainly as it proved, to have life for life in the struggle they anticipated.

The complete destruction of the place was now inevitable. But the pride of the conquerors was galled by the idea that what they had prepared as a signal mark of vengeance should wear the appearance of an accident—one of those catastrophes that so often occur

[30] "On y cryoit le meurdre, que c'estoit la plus grande cruauté et esbahissement que on veit oncques puis la vangeance de nostre Seigueur Jesus Christ, car le feu suivoit les gens aulx talonts de touts costés." Duclercq, tom. iv. p. 281.

when plunder and riot follow in the track of victory. By some it was even believed that the conflagration was the work of the inhabitants themselves, resolved to rob the captors of their prize and compel them to an ignominious retreat. That his original purpose might be made manifest, Charles now gave orders for accelerating the destruction by setting fire to every quarter of the town. In the execution of this mandate the people of Bouvignes were observed to be especially active—eager volunteers in the extirpation of a community which had long been the object of their envious hate. The flames thus kindled at various points soon spread in broad sheets over the devoted town; and, by the end of this eventful week, nothing remained of Dinant but blackened walls and heaps of smouldering ruin.[31]

Even yet the desired consummation was far from having been attained. For several months these ruins continued to be the scene of explorations carried on by the inhabitants of the neighbouring region; while gangs of labourers, summoned from Namur, were employed in demolishing the walls and other remains, and in removing the materials. Officers were commissioned by Philip to superintend the operation, with authority to take possession of every article of value that might be found, and to dispose of it for the benefit of the ducal treasury.[32] Inventories were kept, in which a description of the articles, their value, and the names of the purchasers were duly registered. These accounts

[31] Idem, pp. 280-283. — Haynin, tom. i. p. 72.—Adrianus de Veteri-Bosco, Ampliss. Col., tom. iv. p. 1295. —Henricus de Merica; Theodoricus Paulus, De Ram, pp. 159, 194, 206. —Basin, tom. ii. p. 172.

[32] Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. p. 375, et seq.

are still in existence; and the perusal of them seems to bring with a peculiar vividness before the mind the reality of those events of which the chroniclers have left so bare and meagre a narration. Here, in a list which occupies some dozen pages, are the relics of Dinant, of its industry and of its wealth, grown and multiplied through several centuries, and blasted in a single week. Here are the memorials of ruined households, of broken hearts, of perished lives,—still wet with tears, stained with gore, defaced, mutilated, scorched,—held up for sale, and yielding so many livres, so many sous, so many deniers, to the exchequer of Monseigneur the Duke of Burgundy. "*Item*, a little chain of silver, with a little bell attached; *item*, two little silver cups, weighing together one mark; *item*, a pair of bride's gloves; *item*, a little ivory comb; *item*, an ivory tablet, broken; *item*, an ivory tablet, partly burnt; *item*, an agnus enchased with silver; *item*, a necklace, with ten little paternosters of amber." The greater number of these trinkets, with many others of the same description, are purchased by Jean Esselaire, a broker from Brussels, who has scented in this downfall and extirpation of a whole community an opportunity for replenishing at a cheap rate his stock of curiosities. Other purchasers come from Bouvignes, Namur, Mezières, as to an annual fare or market, make their bargains, and provide themselves with the copper kettles, saucepans, and candlesticks, for which Dinant was famous. Several lots consisting mostly of "hammers, large and small," and other mechanical implements, are disposed of to two or three persons belonging to Dinant, who had searched the rubbish for their own former property, and are permitted to redeem it. These must have

saved something in the general wreck; or they were perhaps furnished by friends in other places (one of them is mentioned as living in the house of Jean Gillon at Namur) with the means of discharging their ransom and of beginning the world anew.[33]

Here, too, as we turn the leaf, is an entry which arrests the eye: "*Item*, found in a wall at the said Dinant, the place indicated by a poor woman," sundry coins of the value stated; "of which there were given to the said poor woman, by way of alms (*pour Dieu*), 16 *aidans*; thus leaving to the profit of Monseigneur 4 livres, 2 sous, 8 deniers." This "poor woman" was one of many who wandered back, after the army had departed, and were seen, day after day, sitting on the piles of rubbish or searching vainly for some vestige of their former habitations.[34] What was their ultimate fate? What was the fate of all that wretched troop,—many of them nurtured in ease, tenderly cherished, fondled, and loved,—all reduced to a common level of destitution and helplessness? A chronicler has told it in the briefest possible summary: "On account of the said destruction the inhabitants became mendicants, and some young women and girls were driven to gain their livelihood by every kind of vice and sin."[35]

The task of demolishing the walls, the towers, the

[33] Comte rendu, Gachard, Doc. Inéd, tom. ii. pp. 379-392. — The quantity of silver plate found among the ruins is a strong indication of the wealth and luxurious habits of the citizens. Many of the articles were uninjured. Adrianus de Veteri-Bosco, who visited Dinant a few days after the fire, found a statue of the Virgin, of beautiful workmanship, standing entire in the portal of the church. Ampliss. Col., p. 1296.

[34] Duclercq, tom. iv. p. 284.

[35] "A cause d'icelle destruction devinrent les povres habitans d'icelle mandians, et aucunes jeunes femmes et filles abandonnées à tout vice et peché pour avoir leur vie." De Troyes, Lenglet, tom. ii. p. 59.

bridges, every thing not destroyed by the fire, was intrusted to contractors; and the amount of work executed by each, with the sums paid for it, is carefully set down in documents still extant.[36] It was not until the end of March, 1467, that these labours were terminated. Then, at length, the vow of vengeance might be regarded as accomplished. The last heap had been sifted and scattered, the last mound levelled, the last stone removed. The site of so many buildings, the spot so long and so recently a scene of activity and life, was bare and desolate, distinguishable only by its bareness and desolation from the country around.[37] Henceforth it should be said, "Here Dinant *was!*"[38]

Of the walls and the houses this was indeed the end. But if the same vigilant eye that watched over their destruction, if the same patient and diligent research which we have seen employed in the examination of the ruins, had followed the unfortunate exiles through their subsequent history, tracing their footsteps, counting up their struggles and their miseries, how large a portion of the tragic story would still remain to be told! What is known of the women—of that band to whom a cruel mercy had been vouchsafed by the conquerors—has been already mentioned. In regard to the male inhabitants, a few scanty notices, gleaned from various sources, furnish the only information we possess. Carried off by the soldiery as prisoners of

[36] Comptes de la démolition de Dinant, Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. p. 395, et seq.

[37] "Mœnia quoque et turres omnes dejectæ sunt, et vallum complanatum, locusque sancitus ne posthac, in memoriam sceleratorum civium, quisnam illic ædificare aut habitationes facere attentaret." Basin, tom. ii. p. 173.

[38] "Ceulx qui regardoient la place ou la ville avoit esté, pooient dire, 'cy fust Dynant!'" Duclercq, tom. iv. p. 283.

war, some were sold by their captors,[39] others were enabled to furnish security for their ransom or to redeem themselves by the fruit of their labour.[40] Philip, indeed, regarded this appropriation of the living booty by his troops as an infringement of his own rights. As Dinant had not been taken by the army, but had submitted to his mercy, all the inhabitants, he contended, were his special prisoners, a portion of his private spoils. Their lives or their ransoms—whichever he might choose to exact—belonged to him alone. If he should think fit, he might, by an act of grace, grant them a free remission from the penalties they had incurred.[41] He directed, therefore, that inquiries should be instituted, and that those who had received the price of blood should be compelled to make restitution. The prosecution of this claim does not seem, however, to have been attended with success, since we find the same orders reiterated at a later period by Philip's successor.

Many of the captives had been left for safe keeping at Namur, the first halting-place after the army quitted Dinant. The people of the former town were not slow to perceive the advantages they might derive from the presence of so large a body of mechanics, the most expert in their occupation of any in the world. They therefore requested and obtained permission from their

[39] Henricus de Merica, De Ram, p. 159.

[40] "Les archives de l'échevinage et celles de la cour du souverain bailliage à Namur renferment les obligations contractées pour la rançon de plusieurs Dinantais, par des Namurois, leur parents ou leurs amis." Borgnet, p. 59.

[41] "Par ce moien toutes les personnes lors estans dedens ladite ville de Dynant fussent à nous et en nostre disposition, pour les faire mourir, les mectre à ranchon ou aultrement leur faire grâce et miséricorde, selon nostre bon plaisir." Borgnet, Appendice, XIII.

sovereign to establish foundries and engage in the manufacture of copper.[42] But, although the situation was in all respects a favourable one, the trade does not appear to have flourished in the soil to which it had been thus violently transplanted. Elsewhere in the Netherlands we find traces of the people of Dinant, who were permitted to form settlements and to take up their abode in certain towns on condition of their remaining within strictly prescribed limits.[43] Many, however, wandered away into France; while a considerable number found the means of transporting themselves to England —a country with which they had long maintained mercantile relations, and where they now received the hospitality and protection which on those shores have ever been accorded alike to the victim of tyranny and to the fallen tyrant.[44]

But in their new homes the exiles retained recollections of their native place which were the more vivid and the more dear for the horrors amidst which they had quitted it and the miseries they had since endured. In the year 1472 Charles of Burgundy gave permission for the erection of a church "on the spot formerly called Dinant," and also of a few dwelling-houses for the officiating clergy, on condition that not more than two per-

[42] Borgnet, Appendices, XIV., XV., XVII.

[43] Reiffenberg, Commerce des Pays-bas.—A colony of the Dinantais was established by Charles at Middlebourg, in Flanders. Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. p. 376, note.

[44] These refugees, having taken part with the Earl of Warwick when the latter revolted against Edward IV., were punished by the deprivation of their privileges. Subsequently, however, Edward, while himself an exile at Bruges, granted to the Dinantais at Middlebourg—in return, it may be surmised, for some assistance in the preparations he was making to recover his crown—the same rights and exemptions in trading with England which their ancestors had enjoyed. Gachard, ubi supra.

sons should reside in each house.[45] It was not till many years after his death that leave was extorted from the successors of this prince for the re-establishment of the commune. In 1493 a small number of persons—among whose names is found that of the brave John de Gerin—assembled at the foot of the familiar cliff, and by the banks of the river whose murmurs had in foreign lands so often mingled with their dreams. Here, in accordance with the terms of their charter, they formed themselves into a new guild, and endeavoured to revive the trade that had formerly furnished employment for so large a population.[46] But this attempt proved unsuccessful. The merchant had found new marts for the supply of his wants. The *Dinanderie* had lost its attractions or the men of Dinant had lost their ancient skill.

Liége, on receiving the tidings of the fall of Dinant, was convulsed with grief and rage. Day by day, while the attack was threatened, letters had been received in the capital urging immediate succours. But the demagogues well knew the probable issue of a contest with a force so superior in discipline and in military resources. They knew that the feverish spirit which they had themselves excited could not be relied upon in the hour of danger. The letters, therefore, were suppressed.

[45] Gachard, Analectes Belgiques, pp. 318, 319.

The people of Bouvignes, having at the time of the destruction of Dinant taken possession of the bones of "Monseigneur Saint Perpète," with the shrine containing them, were ordered to restore them, in 1474, when the cathedral had been rebuilt. They remonstrated, on the ground that they had become the lawful proprietors of these relics, and appealed from the reiterated orders of their sovereign to the Parliament of Malines. In accordance with a judgment delivered by that court, they were compelled, in 1476, to surrender the prize which they had held with so tenacious a grasp.

[46] Borgnet, p. 63.

The people were informed that the peril was not imminent, that Dinant had the means of maintaining a long defence. Even when the guilds had assembled, and demanded to be led against the enemy, a pretext was found for deferring the expedition. The standard of Saint Lambert, without which it would be unlawful and impious to march, could not be delivered to the army in the absence of the chapter, who, at the summons of the bishop, had at length withdrawn from the rebellious city.

In the midst of these discussions a messenger arrived to tell that it was too late—that Dinant, reduced to extremity, hopeless of succour, had surrendered. When the stupor produced by this intelligence had passed, a cry for vengeance arose; and the people poured by a common impulse through the streets, in search of those by whom they had been deceived. De Heers escaped, and took sanctuary in the inviolable precincts of Saint Lambert. One of his colleagues was not so fortunate; he was caught, and instantly put to death by the knives of his captors. While the tumult was at its height, a party of fugitives arrived; among them Jean de Gerin, whose person and character were well known to the citizens, and around whom they now gathered with looks that betokened shame and self-reproach, while they exposed the treachery by which they had been prevented from coming to the relief of their countrymen. "Alas, friends!" replied the noble-hearted man; "it was better so. Our enemies were too strong; you could have done nothing for us, and would only have brought the same ruin on yourselves." These words had the effect of calming the feelings of those to whom they were addressed. It was now necessary indeed that Liége should reflect upon its

own situation, and prepare at once for submission or defence.[47]

On the 1st of September, before the embers of Dinant were yet cold, the Count of Charolais, turning his back upon a scene that bore the ineffaceable marks of his severity, returned to Namur, whence, two days later, he set out, at the head of his triumphant troops, for the enemy's capital. On the 6th he found himself in presence of a force consisting of some thirteen thousand infantry and a few hundred horsemen, strongly posted on the declivity of a hill, and enclosed on either side by the forked branches of a river. Instead of offering battle, however, the leaders of this meagre army sent an embassy to the Burgundian chief, soliciting him to take pity on "the poor people of Liége," and inquiring on what conditions he was willing to admit them to grace. They were told, in reply, that this invasion of their territory was for the purpose of enforcing the observance of the treaty made in the preceding year. Fifty hostages were demanded of them, to be retained until the fine imposed upon them by that treaty had been paid; an additional subsidy was required to defray the expenses of the present expedition; and Charles further insisted that an officer of his own should be admitted into the city to reside there as the representative of the duke in his capacity of "Protector of Liége." A truce of twenty-four hours was granted, during which the envoys were to return to the capital and obtain authority from their constituents for accepting these terms.

In spite of the armistice, some apprehensions were felt by the Burgundian leaders lest the enemy's forces should profit by the darkness and their superior know-

[47] Adrianus de Veteri-Bosco, Ampliss. Col., tom. iv., p. 1296.—Johannis de Los Chronicon, De Ram, pp. 40, 41.

ledge of the ground to make an attack upon the camp, which, from want of sufficient time to bring up the wagons, had not been enclosed and fortified as usual. But the men of Liége, far from meditating such a project, could with difficulty be kept together by their chiefs; and on the following day, when they perceived the ranks of the opposite army swelled by the arrival of the rearguard, they broke up in disorder and began to quit the ground. Some of Charles's captains would have persuaded him, as the armistice had expired, to make an onslaught on the retreating foe, who must soon have been overtaken, scattered, and destroyed. But his natural sentiments of justice and of honour led him to reject this advice; and, after a short delay, the envoys made their appearance, instructed to accede to his demands.

The treaty having been arranged, Guy de Brimeu, Lord of Humbercourt, a member of Charles's household and the most trusted of his counsellors, entered Liége for the purpose of assuming that authority over the state which, exercised by the representative of a foreign prince, might justly be regarded by the people as a badge of conquest and of slavery. The Count of Charolais then marched against Thuin and one or two other towns of the principality, which, warned by the fate of Dinant, opened their gates, and, at the command of the victor, razed their fortifications. When these operations were completed, the army was disbanded, and officers and soldiers returned to their homes, laden with spoils, and loudly expressing their satisfaction with the profitable results of the campaign.[48]

[48] Commines, tom. i., pp. 118-120. — Haynin, tom. ii., pp. 73-76. — Duclercq, tom. iv., pp. 284-291. — Adrianus de Veteri-Bosco, Ampliss.

The remainder of the year and the following spring were spent by the Count of Charolais in visiting the different provinces of the Netherlands. In every town through which he passed he was received with the honours usually reserved for the sovereign. The time, indeed, was at hand when he was himself to assume that title, and to exercise in his own right the powers which he now wielded as the lieutenant of his father.

Satisfied with the punishment which he had seen inflicted upon Dinant, Philip, instead of accompanying the army in its march against Liége, had travelled homewards by easy stages, and devoted the remainder of his days to quiet and religious meditation.[49] In the following June, 1467, while residing at Bruges, he was seized with a fatal illness. His son received the intelligence at Ghent, and, instantly quitting that town, rode with such haste that he outstripped his escort, and arrived at Bruges unaccompanied by a single attendant. Hastening to the chamber of the duke, he gave utterance to a burst of grief, which those who were present, contrasting it with the settled sternness of his nature and the rigour of his ordinary acts, could not behold without amazement.[50] But there was no simulation in those tears, or in the convulsive agitation of that iron frame. It is certain that this man, so cruel and implacable to his foes, so cold and exacting in his treatment of his dependants, felt the strongest affection for his father,

Col., tom. iv., p. 1296, et seq.—Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii., p. 399, et seq.—Lamarche, tom. ii., p. 260.

[49] "Ipse qui senio premebatur, vacabat contemplationi, orationibus et quieti." Theodoricus Paulus, De Ram, p. 194.

[50] Idem, ubi supra.—Duclercq, tom. iv. p. 302.—"N'eust-on à paine jamais creu par avant qu'il en deust avoir fait le quart ou le quint de dueil qu'il en monstra; car le cuidoit-on plus dur en corage, pour aulcunes causes passees; mais nature le vainquit." Chastellain, p. 394.

and looked back upon their former differences with the deepest remorse. He remembered how he had thwarted his father's wishes; how he had shown but too little tenderness for his prejudices and for the tenacity with which Philip clung to the connections and associations of his early life; and how, in the eagerness of his ambition, he had taken advantage of the duke's infirmities and peril to gain immediate possession of a supremacy so soon to be his by the course of nature. He called to mind, perhaps, that night when the old man, baffled by the opposition of a will even more violent and stubborn than his own, had rushed forth into the darkness and the storm, and wandered as if insane through the pathless thickets of the forest. Stung by such recollections as these, Charles threw himself on his knees at the bedside, and besought forgiveness and a blessing from the dying prince. Philip had lost the power of speech; but, adjured by his confessor to give some token of response to this appeal, he turned his eyes upon the supplicant, and feebly returned the pressure of his hand.[51]

On the 15th of June the duke breathed his last, having lived seventy-two years, and reigned forty-eight. There is no question that he was beloved by all classes of his subjects, or that the outward signs of mourning generally assumed at his decease were the indications of

[51] "Se jetta devant son pere a genoulx, tenrement plourant, lui requerrant sa benediction, et que s'aucune chose lui avoit meffait qu'il lui pardonnast; au plus près du duc estoit son confesseur evesque, lequel l'admonesta et pria moult, que s'il avoit encoires entendement qu'il le monstrat, et que au moins s'il ne pooit parler, qu'll feit aulcun signe; a laquelle admonestation, voeulx et prieres de son fils, il retourna ses yeux sur sondit fils, et le regarda, et lui esteindit la main, laquelle il avoit mis sur la sienne, et aultre signe ne lui peut faire ne feit; le comte son fils fust toujours emprès lui, tant qu'il rendit l'ame et qu'il fust expiré." Duclercq, tom. iv. p. 303.

a real sorrow. What they mourned, indeed, was not so much a man as an era. Under Philip the Good the Netherlands had risen to a height of prosperity that was the envy of the world. We may dissent from the judgment of those writers who attribute this prosperity and the flourishing condition of the arts during Philip's reign to his wise protection and enlightened patronage, and who rank him among great rulers. But the union of the different provinces had been productive of advantages which were shared by all; and one solid blessing Philip had assuredly bestowed upon the land: he had given it *peace*—peace in an age of violence, and at a time when he might naturally have been expected to engage in war as a means of extending his dominion.

Some years were to elapse before his remains could be conveyed with fitting ceremony to their final resting place, beside those of his father and grandfather, in the family mausoleum at Dijon. For the present they were deposited in the Church of Saint Donatus at Bruges. Thither they were borne at night amid the blaze of sixteen hundred torches. More than a score of prelates officiated at the obsequies; and the formalities observed were similar to those that usually accompanied the interment of a French monarch.[52] The heralds broke their batons above the bier, and proclaimed, in doleful tones, that Philip, duke of four duchies, count of seven counties, lord of innumerable lordships, was dead. Then, raising their voices to the loftiest pitch, they cried, "Long live Charles, Duke of Burgundy, of Brabant, of Limbourg, and of Luxembourg; Count of Flanders, of Artois, of Burgundy, of Hainault, of Hol-

[52] Duclercq, tom. iv. pp. 303-307.—Ancien Chronique, Lenglet, tom. ii. p. 189.—Chastellain, pp. 396, 397.

land, of Zealand, and of Namur; Marquis of the Holy Empire; Lord of Friesland, of Malines," &c. The multitude that thronged the church responded with a jubilant acclaim.[53]

But he for whom these shouts were raised sat wrapped in thought and grief, as if some inward prescience mocked the echoing sound, forebodings of the brief career before him,—its empty triumphs, its deep humiliations,—of that last, desperate struggle, that final overthrow, that horrid death, that burial by hostile hands upon a hostile soil; the exultings, the curses, not of enemies alone, but of vassals, of friends, of those, perchance, whose voices were now the loudest in the loyal cry, "Long live the duke!"[54]

[53] The mention by Duclercq of the "white batons" thrown into the tomb indicates that the usual proclamation followed. Conf. the description, from manuscripts in the library of the Dukes of Burgundy, of the ceremonies common at the interment of a sovereign of the Netherlands, in Marchal, Vie politique de Charles-Quint.

[54] See the curious passage in Chastellain beginning, "Charles, novellement duc de Bourgoigne, né prince de grande venure et de haulte attente, fils d'ung père qui n'a pareil, et d'ung duc dont le nom ternist les couronne, que siés-tu ici, et te maintiengs morne et pensif?" (p. 397, et seq.) It is somewhat remarkable that Chastellain, who died while Charles was still at the height of his power and reputation, attributes to him, in more than one place, the presentiment of an early death. "Cremoit la mort et la courte vie."

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

BRUGES AND GHENT. — THE JOYOUS ENTRY AND THE "FOOLS OF SAINT LIÉVIN." — RELATIVE POSITIONS OF LOUIS AND CHARLES.

1467.

At the age of thirty-three, in the full vigour of a mind that seemed incapable of vacillation or of fear, and of a body that never shrank from labour or felt fatigue, Charles of Burgundy had come into possession of an inheritance not surpassed by that of any prince in Christendom. Other princes might have loftier titles, a greater nominal authority, or a more extended dominion; but there was none who ruled with more substantial power, or whose revenues were derived from sources so copious and unfailing. The Netherlands were wealthy while other countries were poor; they had practised the arts of peace while the rest of Europe was cursed with continual war. England was still passing through the chaotic struggle of her rival roses. France was still threatened with disruption. Spain, Italy, and Germany were each divided into petty states, engaged in perpetual feuds. The Netherlands alone suffered from no internal causes of disquiet; their territory was wasted by no foreign enemy; the inhabitants, content in the enjoyment of a well secured

freedom and of an unparalleled prosperity, found a sufficient bond of union in loyalty to their common ruler. He, fortunate among princes, might sit in undisturbed serenity, exercising a mild sway, counting his fair towns, his heaps of treasure, his swarms of traders and artisans.

Bruges, where the late sovereign had just been entombed amid the same pomp with which he had surrounded himself in life, was at this time in the zenith of its prosperity. It was the centre of European commerce. It was the mart where the commodities of the three discovered quarters of the world were brought for exchange and distribution. Here were to be seen collected the costly gems and fragrant spices of the East, the drugs and dyes of Italy, the olives and the wines of France, the wool of England and of Spain, the corn and other agricultural products of Germany and Scandinavia, and the ivory, the skins, the feathers, and the gum brought by roving navigators from the coast of Barbary. Seventeen incorporated trading companies, from as many different states, were established at Bruges; many foreign governments sent their factors, or agents, to reside there; and representatives of all the great commercial houses in Europe met daily on the exchange to discuss the variations of the *agio* and the rise or fall of prices.

The habits and style of living at Bruges were singularly festive and luxurious. The residence in the town of so many men of princely wealth, natives and foreigners, and the constant influx of strangers having commercial relations with the inhabitants, called for the exercise of an emulous and unstinted hospitality. The banquets were composed of the rarest delicacies, the

tribute from regions distant and near to the metropolis of trade; while the board was graced by the presence of women famed beyond those of other cities for their personal charms and arrayed with a magnificence that moved the envy of queens. The nobles of the country, drawn thither by these manifold attractions, made Bruges the scene of many a brilliant spectacle; and often, in the thronged streets and market-places, the bustle and the hum of commerce were suspended as the trumpet breathed forth a martial strain, and knights and squires went by in all the pomp of chivalry. Here, too, the sovereign often held his court; and especially was Bruges selected as the fittest place to celebrate his nuptials. Here the first Philip had wedded the haughty Margaret, the heiress of the land, and the second Philip his southern princess, commemorating the occasion by the institution of the Golden Fleece, recognised by Flanders as a type of that industry which had brought the wealth of the world into her lap.

In less than half a century this prosperity, raised apparently on so secure a basis, was to fade and disappear. The spacious streets and squares of Bruges are now silent and grass-grown. Many tenantless and vacant spaces are found within the too ample circuit of its walls. But to the traveller, and especially to the antiquary, it is still the most interesting city of the Netherlands; for many relics of its former greatness are still preserved, and the stately houses, built not with a dull uniformity of aspect, but in varied styles of architecture, carry back the mind of the spectator to a period when this was the chosen residence of men from every land.

From Bruges Charles prepared, some days after his accession, to take his departure for Ghent, the metropolis of Flanders, where he was to receive formal possession of the province and to be acknowledged as its count. Ghent was a manufacturing town. Here the population was homogeneous, and the national manners were displayed without any foreign intermixture. The mode of living was more simple than in Bruges;[1] the accumulation of wealth was less; the municipal privileges were greater; and the mass of the people was more largely endowed with political rights and power.[2]

The working population was divided into fifty-two guilds; but the "great guild," that of the weavers, was supposed to comprise one third of the inhabitants, and it exercised a proportionate influence in the affairs of the town. To these Flemish weavers and spinners of the fifteenth century the Lancashire "operatives" of the nineteenth stand related in a direct line of descent. England, whose magnetic, accumulating, and assimilating power forms the distinctive feature of her earlier history,—as her communicative, diffusive, and irradiating power is the grand characteristic of her modern and imperial career,—owes more, perhaps, to the Netherlands than to all other countries combined. She succeeded to the commercial supremacy of which

[1] "Brugenses et Gandenses longe diversis inter se dissident moribus. Splendidus, magnificus, delicatus, liberalis, suisque nonnunquam profusus est Brugensis. Contra Gandensis parcior, contractior, minor suarum opum ostentator, minore strepitu, minorique luxuria vitam transigens." Meyer, Rerum Flandricarum Tomi X., p. 80.

[2] Something of an aristocratic contempt for mechanical industry is noticeable in the polity of Bruges. Craftsmen were not eligible to any office unless they had abstained from manual labour for a year and a day.

the foundations were collected and laid by them; she borrowed from them the manufactures which her own inventive genius has perfected and her greater enterprise has enabled her infinitely to extend. All their troubles and disasters enured to her advantage;[3] while, in her own convulsions, she parted with nothing she had received, except to her colonies and dependent possessions.

If it were possible for one who lived in a former age to revisit earth, no spectacle would so excite his amazement as the scene of those enormous labours which Science has imposed upon the forces of Nature—where matter and the elements appear endowed with life, with the intelligent and wonder-working capacity of genii; where man seems reduced to insignificance in the presence of those powers which he has subdued to his own use, and which he rules on the condition that he shall ceaselessly watch their operations, supply their demands, and yield a prompt submission to their laws, performing his portion of the task as if himself a lever or a wheel in the machinery which he has created and set in motion. Could we, on the other hand, look back through four centuries, and see what were then the great centres of industry in the fulness of their life, our interest and admiration might be equally excited, though from a different cause. The spindles and looms

[3] In the sixteenth century we find Cardinal Granvelle frequently complaining of the change that had taken place in the commercial relations between the two countries — England sending to the Netherlands many manufactured articles, especially woollen, which she had formerly imported from them while supplying them, in return, with the raw material. Granvelle's remedies, were, of course, prohibitory laws and the compulsory prevention of emigration. But the duke of Alva, with whom injury to England was only a secondary consideration,—the ruin of Flanders being the primary object of his mission,—did his best to accelerate the tide.

with which Flanders, in the Middle Ages, furnished linen and woollen fabrics for the world differed little from those that had been in use thousands of years before on the shores of the Euphrates and the Nile. The workmen, instead of being congregated by hundreds in spacious halls, performed their solitary tasks under their own roofs in small and dimly lighted rooms. But they were bound together by ties of fellowship and subordinated to an invisible direction that determined the whole course and manner of their existence, and rendered them parts of a great human machine complicated in its structure and regular in its operations. Whether as apprentices, "companions," or masters, they were all members of a guild, endowed with its privileges and subject to its discipline. Under the same organization they were citizens and soldiers. Let the tocsin sound, let Rolandt send forth his harsh, imperious summons,—"*Als ic luyde dann ist storm in Vlaenderlandt*,"—and looms and workshops are deserted, the fifty thousand able-bodied men of Ghent pour through the streets, assemble at the appointed station, and constitute a mass united by the strongest elements of cohesion, and governed by recognised principles of order and command.

Class privileges and monopolies, which grew in time to be so hateful and oppressive, were nevertheless the stepping-stones to that general freedom and unrestrained competition which are now considered as the essential conditions of industrial development and progress. Whatever is one day to be exercised as a common right by the whole mass must first be enjoyed as the exclusive privilege of a few. This is Nature's process. She it was who fashioned the little republics,

the free cities, and trade communities of the Middle Ages, with their selfish rivalries, their narrow but ardent spirit of enterprise. They were the models by which she tried her schemes before she put them into operation on a scale better suited to the conception. It needed the jealous sentiment, the strict union, the pride and conscious superiority of a favoured class, to keep alive the arts of civilization that bloomed in these islets surrounded by an ocean of anarchy and turbulence. Hence the self-devotion with which the inhabitants were ever ready to defend the common interests when assailed; hence, too, the grudging eyes with which they saw the same blessings extended to their neighbours.

Throughout the Middle Ages Ghent was distinguished above every other town by its mutinous and stubborn disposition, its tyrannical sway over the smaller towns and villages of its dependent territory, its perpetual strife with places regarded as its rivals, and its frequent revolts against its princes. Its proper history as a great and free city terminates with the dreadful chastisement inflicted on it by the Emperor Charles the Fifth in 1527, from the ruinous effects of which it never recovered. But already, under Philip the Good, it had felt the influence of that union and gradual consolidation of the different provinces which must in time prove fatal to the too arrogant pretensions of any single town. After a rebellion which lasted for more than two years Ghent was overpowered and compelled to make submission. Its magistrates appeared before the duke in their shirts and with ropes about their necks. Three of the principal gates were nailed up, and condemned to remain for ever closed, in memory

of the doom of total destruction which the place was held to have incurred; the guilds were deprived of their banners and their weapons; several hundred persons were hanged, drowned, or beheaded; and, in lieu of the usual mulct, a tax known as the *cueillotte*, similar in its nature to the *octroi* of France and the *alcantara* of Castille, was levied upon every article brought into the city or exposed for sale.

In this war, as already mentioned, Charles of Burgundy had made his first essay in arms. The fiery valour with which he had defended his father's cause had done him no disservice in the eyes of the people against whom he had fought. During his retirement from the court they had been solicitous in offering him their sympathy and in assuring him of their readiness to support him in his rights—a circumstance which led Philip to remark that Ghent was ever loyal to the son of its sovereign, but never to the sovereign himself. No doubt the citizens anticipated that the prince, on his accession to the throne, would show his gratitude for this demonstration of their attachment by relieving them of the penalties imposed upon them since their last revolt. Nor was Charles, when the occasion arrived, unprepared to make some concessions in their behalf. Knowing, however, the difference that might probably be found between their expectations and what he was willing to grant, he made close inquiries of the deputation which had come to invite him to Ghent in regard to the present temper of the people. Being satisfied with the assurances he received on this head, he took his departure from Bruges, escorted by a large body of nobles, and carrying with him not only his young daughter, but the immense treasure of jewels

and gold crowns which Philip had left at his decease.[4]

In accordance with an invariable usage, the duke halted for the night at the village of Swynaerde, at a league's distance from Ghent.[5] Hither had flocked a great number of persons who, at different times, had been banished from the city for political and other offences, and who had now assembled to present their petitions to the prince for pardon and the restitution of their civil rights. Exile was then a common punishment even for crimes of no light magnitude; and it was customary for a new sovereign, on the occasion of his "joyous entry,"—as his first visit to a place after his accession was called,—to grant a liberal measure of his grace to those who had in this manner been deprived of invaluable privileges, the loss of which, to such as had long enjoyed them, was second only to that of life itself. The persons who now hoped to receive the benefit of this custom spent the night in a neighbouring meadow; and Charles directed that each separate case should be investigated, in order that the more guilty of their number should be prevented, in the morning, from joining his train.[6]

It happened that the following day, (Sunday, June 28) was the anniversary of a popular festival—one of those celebrations, partly religious and partly saturnalian in their character, which were common throughout Catholic Europe, and especially in Flanders, where they were marked by a greater freedom and coarseness, if not by more hilarity, than elsewhere. It was the

[4] Chastellain, p. 401, et seq.

[5] Rapport de ce qui est arrivé lors de la joyeuse entrée du comte Charles, Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. i. p. 210.

[6] Chastellain, p. 404.

Fête of Saint Liévin, a martyr of the seventh century, whose bones were still preserved in the cathedral of Ghent. The people were accustomed to assemble in the morning in front of the church, and, having received from the canons the shrine containing the precious relics, they carried it in procession to the village of Houthem, the spot on which the saint had suffered martyrdom. Here the "Fools of Saint Liévin" passed the day and the succeeding night in revelry and in broils, which were now, however, less often attended with serious consequences than formerly, when the members of the guilds had been permitted to go armed. The next morning they returned home, and deposited in his usual resting-place the saint whose memory they had thus desecrated by their carousals.[7] On the present occasion the magistrates, foreseeing the inconveniences that might arise if the duke should make his entrance at a time when the streets were filled with revellers, and all regulations for the maintenance of order would be set at nought, had directed that the procession should leave the town on the Saturday evening, and should not return till the following Monday.[8] In consequence of this wise arrangement the utmost decorum prevailed on the morning of Sunday, when Charles, preceded by the municipal authorities, by the clergy and religious orders, and by the deans of the guilds and the principal citizens, who had come out to meet him, and followed by his nobles, and by the pardoned exiles to the number of nearly eight hundred, passed through the gate, and took his way to the Church of Saint John. Here he swore, in the usual form, to maintain the privileges of the county.

[7] Chastellain, p. 403. [8] Rapport, Gachard, Doc. Inéd., ubi supra.

In like manner an oath was administered to the representatives of the people that they would be his good and loyal subjects. A cord was then placed in his hand attached to a bell, which he sounded, in token that he had assumed the sovereignty of Flanders. When the ceremonies were concluded he retired, with the members of his suite, to the lodgings prepared for him.[9]

In the meantime the lower orders of the people, indifferent, as it seemed, in regard to the arrival of their prince, spent the day at Houthem in riotous festivity. It was not till the afternoon of Monday that they prepared to return to Ghent. A great number of them were intoxicated; but there were others, as it soon appeared, who had occupied themselves with a more serious business than that which had formed the ostensible pretext for the assembly, and who now assumed the direction of the proceedings. When the procession was formed, every man was found to be provided with weapons. Banners, too, were kept in readiness to be displayed when the proper moment had arrived. Selecting their route, they entered the city through a narrow street, in which stood a house used by the collectors of the odious *cueillotte* in the transaction of their business. Here the procession halted. A cry rang through the street, "Down with the *cueillotte!*" Then ironical murmurs were heard from those who surrounded the relics of the saint: "Saint Liévin refuses to go forward; he wishes to go through the house; a passage must be made for him!" Axes and other instruments of destruction were procured; and in a short time the build-

[9] Rapport, Gachard, Doc. Inéd., p. 211.

ing, which was of no great size, was levelled with the ground.[10]

With triumphant shouts the populace resumed their march. Instead of taking their way to the church, they proceeded to the great market-place (Marché de Vendredi) in front of the Hôtel de Ville, the usual place of assemblage for the guilds. The body of the saint was placed in the centre of the square. The people ranged themselves around it in the order with which they were familiar. Then the banners—the same in colour and form as those which had been proscribed—were unfurled, and the fact was thus openly proclaimed that Ghent was in revolt.

By this time tidings of what was going on had reached the duke. Advised by those about him, he contented himself at first with sending to inquire the meaning of the tumult. The messenger failing to return, Charles mounted his horse and set out, accompanied by his escort, for the scene of action. The nearer they approached it, the louder rose the swell of voices and the more dense became the throng of those who were hurrying in the same direction. It was not without a feeling of alarm that the nobles saw themselves gradually hemmed in, and their own inconsiderable number surrounded by a vast concourse of rude and determined men. But still, as they paused, the people called to them to go forward without fear; and the crowd, thickening behind them, cut off all retreat.[11]

[10] Commines, tom. i. p. 143. — Chastellain, p. 405. — Rapport, Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. i. p. 212.

[11] "A tous lez affuioient gens armés devers le grand flot, à diverses cohortes; et tant croissoient et multiplioient, que c'estoit ung horreur. . . . Et ainsy passoient oultre combien qu'en teles paroles et en tele mutacion n'y avoit cely qui ne tremblast de peur, et eust volu estre à cent lieues loing arrière, car oncques si horrible frayeur n'avoient veue." Chastellain, p. 407.

Charles traversed the square with a knitted brow, and his eye sent forth that fiery gleam which was wont to reveal the intensity of his kindled wrath. As he dismounted in front of the Hôtel de Ville, he turned upon the people with sharp exclamations of anger and disdain; and singling out a person who appeared to him to be active in promoting disturbance, he exclaimed, "I know you well," and struck him with his baton. But, instead of shrinking timidly from the blow and from that ireful and imperious look, as many a stout and valiant soldier had done, the freeman of Ghent vented a loud imprecation, and, placing himself in a defiant attitude full before his sovereign, in a hoarse and threatening tone bade him repeat the blow. The challenge was not one to be declined by the person to whom it was addressed. His baton was again raised aloft, when Louis de Bruges, lord of Gruthuse, a nobleman thoroughly acquainted with the character and habits of his countrymen, caught the uplifted arm, and exclaimed in a low but earnest voice, "For God's love do not strike that man again!" [12] Then, drawing the duke into the interior of the building, Gruthuse proceeded to rebuke him in round terms for his rash and inconsiderate conduct. "This is not an occasion, Monseigneur," he said, "for displaying the courage and temerity of the battle-field. What is needed now is prudence and a nice discretion, if you would not bring ruin on your head. What, think you, cares this senseless rabble for your menaces and hard words? I tell you, all our lives hang by a thread of silk." [13]

To such reasoning as this no man, even in the ex-

[12] Chastellain, p. 408.—Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. i. p. 212.
[13] Chastellain, ubi supra.

cited mood of passion, could be deaf. Counselled by his sagacious vassal, on whose ripe experience he set a due estimation, Charles adopted a course better suited to the exigencies of the occasion than that which his own hasty temper had dictated. Ascending to the balcony in front of the house, he presented himself in full view of the assembled people. The tumult was at once hushed; for it was characteristic of the citizens of Ghent that, with all their readiness to rebel against their sovereign, they were seldom unmindful of the reverence due to his person.[14] But, when he began to speak to them in the Flemish tongue, and addressed them as his children, they suddenly remembered that they had not yet greeted him with those expressions of satisfaction which should have attended his "joyous entrance;" and loud cries of "Welcome! welcome!" resounded from all sides of the square. After a short address expressive of the benignity of his feelings towards his good people of Ghent, Charles left it to the Lord of Gruthuse, who stood beside him, and who possessed a greater familiarity with the language, to declare his intentions more at length. The skilful orator, avoiding all questions in regard to the cause of the tumult, contented himself with rousing the sympathies of his audience for a prince who had just come to the throne, not by conquest or purchase, but by clear and natural right, and whose sole desire it was to learn the sentiments of his subjects and to satisfy their just demands. His harangue was greeted with general applause, and there was a fair prospect that the matter would be adjusted by the appointment of a committee of conference, in which case

[14] "Une chose ont ilz assez honneste, selon leur mauvaistié: car à la personne de leur prince ne toucheront ilz jamais." Commines, tom. i. p. 144.

the people would have dispersed, when, suddenly, one of the crowd—"a tall, rude villain"—appeared on the balcony beside the duke, having clambered up from the outside of the building, and, striking on the window-frame, in order to call attention, with an iron gauntlet which covered his hand, turned towards the citizens and thus addressed them: "My brothers, who stand below there, and who have come to lay your complaints and grievances before your prince, you first desire—do you not?—the punishment of those who have misgoverned your town, and defrauded both you and your sovereign." "Ah, yes!" responded his auditors, as if suddenly recalled from some digression foreign to the purpose to the real object that occupied their thoughts. "You seek," he continued,—"do you not?—the suppression of the *cueillotte*?" "Yes! yes!" "And you wish to have your gates re-opened, your banners restored, and all your customs re-established as they existed in former days?" "Yes! yes!" shouted the people, their enthusiasm now kindled to a flame. Turning towards the duke, who stood as if thunderstruck at this practical exhibition of popular freedom, the self-elected deputy remarked, "This, in brief, Monseigneur, is what the folk there below have assembled to request of you and what you have to provide for. I have declared it in their name; and, as you hear, they avow the statement as their own." [15]

"O glorious majesty of God;" exclaims the high-born chronicler of these events, "to think that so intolerable and outrageous a villany should be committed in the very presence of a prince!—that a man of low and altogether vile condition should set himself by the very

[15] Chastellain, p. 409.

flank of his lord, and there utter such language in contempt of his sovereign right and dignity as it would have fretted the heart of the poorest noble to be compelled to listen to and to tolerate! And yet," he adds, dejectedly, "this noble prince was forced to endure it for the time, and to cover with a smile the vexation of which he was ready to die." [16]

The increasing tumult in the square showed plainly enough the hopelessness of any further attempt on the part of Charles and his noble counsellor to evade the difficulties of their position. For some moments they eyed each other with looks expressive of their embarrassment, each mutely questioning the other as to the course to be pursued. At length Gruthuse recovered his accustomed self-possession. Turning towards the person whose sudden appearance on the scene had thus interfered with his well contrived plans, "My friend," said he, in a cool tone of superiority, "it was not necessary that you should climb up here, to the place reserved for the prince and his nobles. You would have been heard very well from below, and Monseigneur would have given you your answer. You are a strange fellow, methinks. Come, descend! descend! Be off with you, you and your crew! Monseigneur can settle his affairs with his people without you for their deputy." Somewhat abashed by this easy assurance in the great person-

[16] "O glorieuse majesté de Dieu, et que vécy une oultrageuse et intolérable vilenie commise en la face d'ung prince, et d'ung tout vil bas homme, que de soi venir mettre et joindre emprès les flancs d'ung tel prince son seigneur, encore et proférer paroles contraires à sa haulteur par contempnement de sa seigneurie, et de quoy le plus povre noble homme du monde, par la manière du faire eust pu avoir le cuer crevé d'annuy et de despit de le tollérer et porter. Et se convint toutesfoi que ce noble prince le portast et tollérast pour ung mieulx à ceste heure, et qu'il le coulast par une risée, qui en devoit morir de dueil." Chastellain, ubi supra.

ages whom from a sudden impulse he had ventured to confront, the man instantly obeyed the command, and slunk away amongst the crowd. Charles then addressed some words to the citizens, giving them a promise that their grievances would be taken into consideration, and, descending to the street, mounted his horse, and, accompanied by his suite, returned, without molestation, to his lodgings.[17]

All that night the people remained assembled on the spot where their banners had been displayed. The duke, in like manner, ordered his followers to keep watch and ward, while he passed the hours in consultation with his principal nobles. That he would be obliged to make the concessions that were required of him was the inevitable conclusion of these deliberations. He had little cause, indeed, to fear for his own safety; but what he most dreaded was that his daughter would fall into the hands of the people and be held as a hostage until their demands were complied with. The treasure, too, which he had brought with him from Bruges would scarcely be secure in the midst of a mutinous population. It was suggested that some way might be devised of secretly removing the young princess and the treasure to a place of safety. But no feasible project was started. The scanty number of the nobles and their attendants put forcible resistance out of the question. Charles felt that he had placed himself, with unsuspecting confidence, in a situation whence there was no loophole of escape, and where courage and resolution would prove of no avail. Early in the morning the lord of Gruthuse made his appearance before the people, and gave them the assurance for which they

[17] Chastellain, p. 410.

waited by echoing in a loud tone the shout with which they greeted him: "Down with the *cueillotte!*" He then announced to them that the duke acceded to all their requests, and desired that a few of their number should wait on him and receive from his own lips the confirmation of his envoy's report. When this had been done the relics of Saint Liévin were deposited in the church. The people then marched to the "condemned gates," which they broke open, leaving them extended wide. In the course of the day they also demolished a house, which, like the former, had been used for the collection of the odious tax. The news of these proceedings fixed more rigidly on Charles's brow the sullen frown with which he had submitted to his fate. On the next day he quitted Ghent. The magistrates and the deputies of the people waited on him and offered their excuses in the most humble terms for what had occurred. They assured him of their own innocence, and attributed the outbreak to the superiority which the mere rabble had acquired in the town over the wealthy and well-disposed citizens. They besought him, however, at an early day to confirm in writing the concessions which he had made, as otherwise fresh riots might be apprehended. The duke listened to this address in silence; and, though he adhered to his engagements and signed the necessary instruments, the triumph of the people of Ghent was chilled by secret misgivings—by the consciousness that, at the moment of his accession, they had made an enemy of their sovereign.[18]

It was natural indeed that this insult should sink

[18] Chastellain, pp. 411, 412.—Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. i. p. 213.—Commines, tom. i. pp. 143, 144.—Extrait de Wiellant, Antiquités de Flandre Lenglet, tom. ii. p. 627.

deep into the mind of a prince in whom the spirit of domination rose so high and strong, and whose will so seldom brooked opposition from any quarter. At the very outset of his career Charles looked forward not to a peaceful reign, in which the internal administration of his states was to be the chief object of his attention, but to a continual struggle with foreign powers and to the enlargement of his possessions by foreign conquests. His present dominions he regarded only as the basis of a loftier power and a wider sway; and it was indispensable that from them he should receive a constant support—that at home his supremacy should be undisputed, his commands implicitly obeyed. He feared, and with good reason, the effects of that example which had just been set by Ghent. At Malines, Antwerp, and other places, popular commotions followed — slight indeed, and quickly suppressed and punished, but sufficient to indicate the passage of an electric current such as, in the same atmosphere, had so often kindled civil war. The Estates of Brabant, having been convened at Brussels, debated whether they should acknowledge the right of succession in the son of Philip the Good, or admit a claim set up by the count of Nevers as the rightful representative of Philip's predecessor. The question was speedily decided in Charles's favour, but not without strong opposition on the part of the burghers of the province, who saw the hazard to which their liberties would be exposed in his course towards a more extended empire. In these movements a hand might be detected which had long before been covertly stretched out to thwart the purposes of the Burgundian prince, and which was henceforth to be ever busy in strewing embarrassments upon his path. It was the French monarch

who had set Nevers on to reassert pretensions he had already formally renounced; and the agents of Louis were even now employed at Liége in exciting to a new insurrection the people whom he had before betrayed, but who had not yet sounded the depths of his perfidy and meanness.

Yet what were the difficulties with which Charles now had to contend compared with those that tasked the energies and tried the temper of the king? What, for example, were the pretensions of Nevers in comparison with those of Charles of France, who still styled himself "Duke of Normandy" and waited in secure shelter till his allies and adherents should be prepared to support his rights? That negotiations with this object were already in progress was no secret to Louis. He had even intercepted messengers passing between the courts of Brittany and Burgundy, and had dismissed them with expressions of his high satisfaction with the friendly feelings subsisting among his great vassals. He at the same time continued his own negotiations with his brother, and endeavoured to convince him of the sincerity of that affection with which monarchs are accustomed to regard those who stand nearest to them in the order of succession. But these efforts were fruitless; and equally unsuccessful was a mission with which the Duke of Calabria had been intrusted for secretly abducting the person of the prince.[19] The only other alternative was to enter Brittany with an army; but this was a measure which Louis did not venture to adopt, knowing that it would be followed by an immediate declaration of war from Charles of Burgundy.

[19] Lenglet, tom. ii. p. 599.

Again: that Louis was able to keep alive the mutinous disposition of the people of Liége was, after all, but a petty annoyance to his rival; while there floated before his own mind the continual apprehension that England would be drawn into an alliance against him, and that contest be renewed which had so often shaken the French monarchy to its foundation. The Duke of Burgundy was himself of English descent—by the Lancastrian line, it is true; but this had not prevented him from offering his hand to the Princess Margaret, the sister of Edward the Fourth, who seemed now to be firmly seated on the throne. The offer was accepted; and in the spring preceding Charles's accession he had sent his half-brother Antony to London, at the head of a splendid embassy, to settle the preliminaries of the marriage. The fame of the Great Bastard as a valiant soldier and a redoubted jouster gained him a warm reception at the court of Edward. In a brilliant tournament, of which minute descriptions both in French and English have been preserved,[20] Antony and the Lord Scales, the brother of the queen, and, next to Edward himself, the foremost among English knights, put each other's prowess to the proof, and conceived a mutual admiration and esteem. By all the nobles of what might be called the queen's faction the Burgundian alliance was viewed with the highest favour; and the king, indolent as a politician, but animated by an ardent sympathy in all the tastes and pursuits of chivalry, inclined naturally to the same side.

[20] The contemporary English account of this celebrated tournament is printed in the Excerpta Historica. It claims the victory for the English knight, as Lamarche does for the Burgundian.

Louis, however, does not seem to have been deeply troubled by the report of an alliance which was to be founded on sympathy of tastes and cemented by the courtesies of chivalry. He imagined that the spring on which depended the conduct of the English government lay elsewhere, and that the moment had arrived when it was to be submitted to his own touch. He knew that Warwick stood at the head of the English nobility; that he exercised a vast influence over the people; that he was reputed to be the most skilful soldier and the most astute politician in the realm; that his hand was supposed to have placed Edward upon the throne, and to be strong enough to unseat him if the pleasure-loving prince should prove ungrateful. Of what use to seek an alliance either with York or with Lancaster? Neither house had any true basis of its own in the affections or the prejudices of the nation. Warwick, who to-day upheld the one, might to-morrow overturn it and reinstate the other. The *king* was but a pageant; with the *king-maker* resided the substantial power. We have seen the eagerness with which, in 1463, Louis had looked forward to a promised interview with the great English earl. In that year, however, his hopes were disappointed; Warwick did not visit France.[21] But in the present summer, (1467,)

[21] It is stated by many English historians that Warwick went over to France, in 1463 or 1464, for the purpose of negotiating a marriage between Edward and the Princess Bonne of Savoy, a sister of the French queen; that, on his return, he found the king already engaged, or privately wedded, to Elizabeth Woodville; and that his resentment on this account was the original source of his subsequent breach with the Yorkist sovereign. Lingard and Sharon Turner have discarded this story as improbable, and as resting on no contemporaneous authority. In addition to the arguments adduced by them, and the silence of French writers like Chastellain and De Troyes, conclusive evidence may be found in the language of a letter, dated November 17, 1464, and written by Sir Robert Neville, an agent and kinsman of

while Philip the Good lay on his death-bed, while the Great Bastard was still at the English court,—at a moment, therefore, doubly critical,—the earl crossed the channel and landed on the shores of Normandy. The king, accompanied by the queen and her ladies, awaited him at Rouen, and in the reception which he gave him was profuse in demonstrations of cordiality and joy. A solemn procession of the clergy, headed by the prelates of the province with pontifical cross and banner, went forth to meet him, and escorted him to the cathedral, where service was performed and thanks were offered up for his safe arrival.[22] The nobles of his suite were sumptuously lodged; and the merchants of the town had orders to supply them, at the king's expense, with whatever articles might please their taste; so that these English, says the chronicler, who had come over in the meanest attire, were seen dressed, at their departure, in the costliest satins, velvets, and other rich stuffs.[23] Warwick was accommodated with apartments in a convent adjoining the royal residence; but, as if the facilities thus afforded for communication were not sufficient, Louis ordered a passage to be opened in the partition wall between the buildings.

Of what passed in their daily and nightly confer-

Warwick: "Mon beau cousin de Warvy n'est venu par de çà ainsi comme il avoit promis." (Commines, ed. Dupont, tom. iii., Preuves, p. 212.) The writer mentions the regret expressed at the court of Burgundy that Warwick had failed to keep the appointment. Nevertheless the common account—as not unfrequently turns out to have been the case—rested on a foundation of fact, while the conclusions which have been drawn from the detection of its inaccuracy are essentially unsound. See post, vol. ii., Book III., ch. 1, note 14.

[22] De Troyes, Lenglet, tom. ii. p. 66.

[23] "Unde omnes ferme comitis ejusdem stipatores, qui cum laneis et communibus venerant vestimentis amicti, damasceno et veluto, vel pretiosis laneis pannis (quos Rothomagum, pro cæteris regni urbibus, mittere solet), in Angliam sunt reversi." Basin, tom. ii. p. 179.

ences we have no trustworthy account. But it is certain that the two parties arrived at a good understanding in regard to the objects which they severally had in view; and it is not difficult to conjecture what these objects were. Warwick had reached that point which presents itself in every great career, where strenuous efforts, crowned with success, have raised a man to the summit of his desires, but where he discovers that no repose, no secure enjoyment, is possible for him; that the foundations of his greatness are unstable; that he has himself heaped together materials that may be used for his own destruction; and that a thousand internal hindrances have sprung into activity at the moment when all outward obstacles have been vanquished and put down. With irresistible ardour and with implacable hostility he had overthrown, pursued, and all but exterminated the enemies of the House of York. He had laid the prince whose cause he had espoused under obligations too great to be repaid. He had imagined that, under a sovereign of Edward's temperament, his dream of power would be amply realized, and he should be able to exercise an undisputed control over the affairs of the kingdom. Doubtless his line of policy would, in many respects, have been advantageous to the interests not only of his party, but of his country. At home he would have firmly established the power of the reigning house, and extinguished the last embers of a civil war which had long distracted the land. By a solid peace with France, and a free acknowledgment of the rights of its lawful monarch, he would have effaced the recollections of much glory, indeed, but also of much shame; he would have closed a breach which had originated in a state of things now happily extinct;

and he would have stifled illusive dreams of future conquests which dazzled the national mind and prevented it from recognizing the changes that had taken place. He would, also, by securing the confidence of the French king, have deprived the exiled adherents of Lancaster of the protection which they received in his dominions, and of the hopes of assistance which, from policy, he still allowed them to indulge. But no sooner had Warwick achieved those victories that might have been turned to such good account than he lost that ascendancy over Edward's mind which was the mainspring of all his plans. Edward's was one of those characters that require for the development or display of their higher qualities the pressure of constant opposition, of great emergencies, of desperate circumstances. In ordinary situations he displayed neither talent nor resolution; he sank into sloth and self-indulgence, and willingly surrendered himself to the guidance of inferior minds which urged him to no exertion and demanded of him no sacrifice. By his unconcealed repugnance to the king's marriage with Elizabeth Woodville, Warwick not only stimulated into activity the aversion with which Edward secretly regarded him, but he also gave occasion for the formation of a strong party in the court which aimed openly to accomplish his downfall. He was too powerful to be at once discarded; but he saw the necessity of seeking new elements of support; and that alliance with the French monarch which he had formerly courted in the interests of his sovereign and his country he now regarded as the anchor by which his own fortunes were to be saved from shipwreck.

Louis, on his part, had two contingencies in view.

If Warwick were able to maintain his ground against his enemies, the existing truce between the two countries would be renewed, and the plotted coalition between Edward and the Dukes of Burgundy and Brittany would fall to the ground. But if Warwick should be disgraced, what followed? He then became the lever by which the present government, established by himself, might be overturned, or those intestine divisions in England be prolonged the continuance of which was the best security for France against the deadliest of all her perils.[24]

On the 18th of June the two confederates separated. Louis returned to his capital, where he received a letter from the new Duke of Burgundy acquainting him with Philip's death. Warwick, on his return to England, was received by his sovereign with a burst of indignation and reproach. His mission, undertaken with the trivial pretext of complaining of some violations of the truce, was disavowed; and the French envoys whom he had brought with him were with difficulty admitted to a single audience. In fact, the earl, in the step he had just taken, had committed himself more deeply than he had anticipated. He might not have meditated treason; he might not have broached his grievances in the ear of a foreign monarch, or accepted his suggestions as to the means of obtaining redress; but the world was not slow to perceive the real motive with which, at such a moment, he had visited the French king, and the consequences, how-

[24] Commines makes a remark to the same effect; but more explicit confirmation of the view taken in the text in regard to the policy of Louis will be found in a letter written by himself several years later, which we shall have occasion to cite.

ever remote, to which their interview pointed. It afforded a pretext for depriving Warwick of his ascendancy in the government, while it undermined his popularity and thus weakened his chances of revenge. He had sought the friendship of a prince who was looked upon by the nobles of every land as an enemy to their order and to the consecrated ideas of chivalry; and he had desired to pledge the nation to an alliance which, preserving the recollections and traditions of glorious conquests, it still regarded with abhorrence. The Duke of Burgundy, on the other hand,—the mirror of chivalry, the founder of the Toison d'Or, the defender of feudal rights,—was justly entitled to the sympathies of the English lords; while the extensive commerce carried on between England and the Netherlands had formed the ground of peaceful and intimate relations for many centuries.

Thus the party divisions in France and in England, long disconnected, were again interwoven. The time, however, had not yet arrived for the development of these intrigues. Warwick, by the course he had taken, had lost that commanding influence with the masses of the Yorkist faction which he had acquired by his skill and courage in leading them to victory. To regain his former power he must begin his career anew; he must bury the past and induce the like oblivion in others; he must seek associates among those from whom he was separated by a sea of blood. Warwick and Lancaster—how revolting such a combination! The arch-traitor—who had thrown the realm into confusion, who had heaped insults on the sacred person of majesty itself—swearing fealty to Henry, giving counsel to Margaret, exchanging vows

of friendship with the Cliffords and the Somersets, with the exiled representatives of families whose best blood he had shed on the battle-field and on the scaffold, and with whom his name was a word of infamy and horror —such a union no head but that of Louis could have planned, no hand but his have woven.

That even a foreign prince, connected by a remote line of descent with the House of Lancaster, should be affianced to a daughter of York,—that a single drop from one of these streams should mingle with the current of the other,—was a thing to excite wonder, if not abhorrence.[25] A strife so deadly, handed down from one generation to another, seemed to spring from a rabid fury incapable of being cured save by the extinction of one or other of the hostile races. Charles himself had felt no slight repugnance to the match proposed for him.[26] But this sentiment was overcome by an aversion which in his breast was stronger and more deeply rooted—one which had become the dominant motive of his actions, leading him to shape and regulate his policy with the sole aim of thwarting the policy of the French king. This hostility to Louis had now, indeed, begun to assume its full proportions. It no longer wore the appearance of mere private discontent

[25] The strength of this feeling at the Burgundian court reveals itself in the laboured attempts of Chastellain—who evidently shared in it—to justify the duke's abandonment of the Lancastrian party and his alliance with the house of York. He returns to the subject again and again, laying the blame on Louis, whose insidious policy had driven the Burgundian sovereign into this repulsive connection.

[26] "S'il y eust eu en Angleterre autre mariage de sorte à ly, jamais ne se fust allié au roy Edouard; car avoit esté tout parfaitement son contraire en faveur du sang de Lancastre, dont il estoit. .... Accepta le mariage, et promist d'aller avant, contrer cuer toutesfois, comme lymesmes le confessa à tel qui le me révela depuis; mès ce fit-il, par corrage d'amer mieux fouler et grever autrui, qu'estre gréve ne foulé." Chastellain, p. 425.—And see Commines, tom. i. p. 230.

or internal disaffection. It was the steady resistance of a rival power, independent in its policy, hostile in its ambition. During the last quarter of a century the French monarchy, loosened from the grasp of the foreigner, had been rapidly recruiting its energies, and gradually acquiring for itself a more secure position and a more solid basis. During the same period a new monarchy had been growing up, partly within and partly without the boundaries of France, acknowledging a partial subjection to the French crown, but maintaining, in truth, a separate existence, strong enough to be dangerous as a neighbour and still more dangerous as an inmate. Under Charles the Seventh and Philip the Good the development of these two powers had proceeded without interruption, but without collision. Neither of these princes had neglected any opportunity of extending and consolidating his dominions or aggrandizing his authority. But in both ambition was tempered by other characteristics—in Charles by a natural moderation of character not incompatible with a far-sighted intellect; in Philip by a more limited range of vision, and by the self-complacency of one who had never been compelled to wrestle with fortune. Both, also, were influenced by feelings and recollections which led them to treat with caution such subjects of controversy as arose out of their mutual relations. Charles had learned from early experience to believe that his interest lay in maintaining not only peace but friendship with the House of Burgundy. Philip, forced at the beginning of his career to ally himself with the enemies of the French crown, cherished nevertheless the traditional glories of the House of Valois, and boasted that he was a "son of France." But the suc-

cessors of these princes were impelled by a different spirit. Louis of France and Charles of Burgundy were alike absorbed by ambition, alike restless and daring, alike eager to mount from the level on which they stood and to push to its final consequences the policy which each had adopted from instinct rather than from reason. So far they resembled each other—in all other respects how different! And the ambition of each found a constant stimulus in this contrast of character or in the mutual antipathy engendered by it.[27] Their hostility was a natural but not inevitable result of their relative positions. It was sharpened and perpetuated by the opposition of their natures—by the pride and violence of the one, the craft and duplicity of the other, breeding continual suspicion and jealousy, inciting to continual aggressions, and baffling all attempts at reconcilement and peace. "The king," remarks Chastellain, "knew how to recede in order to gather himself up for a longer spring; he knew how to grant and to yield in order to recover double; he knew how to suffer and endure till time and opportunity brought him his revenge. And the duke was not less to be feared for his great courage and resolve, his indifference to danger, his contempt for menaces, the diligence with which he pursued his aims, the confidence with which he looked forward to their attainment."

[27] "Entre ces deux princes de tout temps y avoit rancune. . . . . Avoient conditions et meurs incompatibles, et volontés toutes discordantes; et plus alloient avant les jours, et plus enchéoient en grans différens ensemble et en désespérables aigreurs." Chastellain, p. 496.

CHAPTER II.

RENEWED WAR WITH LIÉGE. — MEDIATION OF SAINT-POL. — BATTLE OF BRUSTEN. — SURRENDER OF LIÉGE.

1467.

Liége was still in a condition of frantic, hopeless anarchy. An incurable malady preyed upon this little state—a wasting fever, accompanied with delirious ravings, that consumed its vital energies.[1] The bishop still remained at Huy, refusing to return to the capital, where a violent and blood-stained faction, without pretending to govern, played a desperate game, and maintained itself by murders and proscriptions. The country was ravaged by outlaws, who burst at times into the neighbouring territory of Namur or Brabant, keeping the whole border in a perpetual alarm. The treaty remained unexecuted: the enormous fine imposed by its stipulations was still unpaid; and the hour must soon arrive when the inexorable creditor would again present himself, with a claim made heavier by the long delay. The sense of this impending ruin—the intense fear and hate with which Liége, glowing with the spirit of national life, drunk with freedom, regarded the stern, cold, exacting power by whose waxing greatness it was menaced and foredoomed—had been the original cause of its distemper, and furnished the daily visions of its

[1] Bursts of senseless fury alternate with weak moanings and the fantasies of superstition. The skies gleam with prodigies; the shrines are prolific of miracles. See the curious particulars in Adrianus de Veteri-Bosco and the chronicles published by De Ram.

distraught imagination. And on the other side stood an insidious tempter urging its frenzy, feeding it with stimulants, with delusive promises of aid, of a speedy release from the dread spectre that oppressed it.

Humbercourt, who had been left at Liége to represent the duke, to remind the people that they were now virtually subjects of the house of Burgundy, to warn them of the certain consequences of any infraction of the treaty, soon found himself powerless to arrest the mischief, and stood aloof from the gang of desperadoes that managed the popular assemblies, a silent spectator of the drownings, beheadings, and confiscations by which the ecclesiastics and the wealthier citizens were kept in terror and submission. Yet he courted popularity with the masses, enrolled himself as a member of one of the guilds, and received the rights of citizenship. At the same time he reported to his sovereign all that occurred, and kept a vigilant watch on the agents of the French king that were ever passing to and fro, and on the movements of the royal troops under Dammartin stationed near the frontiers. When he perceived that a new crisis was approaching he returned to Brussels, and acquainted Charles that an attack was about to be made on Huy, the people having resolved to seize their prince and carry him to the capital, to restore at least the form of government, perhaps to serve as a hostage for the forbearance of his kinsman and ally. A small force, under the Sire de Bossut, was despatched in haste to defend the town until more adequate assistance could be sent. The enemy arrived —a confused multitude, burghers, Companions of the Green Tent, all the wandering bands that scoured the land and were attracted by the hope of plunder,

carrying their various banners, and armed with cross-bows, culverins, and pikes. They were unprovided with cannon for battering the walls; but parties of picked men, acquainted with all the defiles and winding paths of the rocky hills that overlooked the place, patrolled its circuit until they found an unguarded spot, and obtained possession of the outer defences. Louis of Bourbon turned pale with terror at the prospect of at last meeting his subjects face to face. He besought Bossut, instead of attempting a defence, to conduct him from the place while there was yet time for escape. The Burgundian officer, supposing that the main object of his mission was to protect the person of the bishop, did not think himself at liberty to refuse this request. But, on their arrival at Brussels, he met with a reception from his sovereign which undeceived him on this point. "Your duty," said the duke, "was to regard my honour, not to listen to the prayers of a cowardly priest."[2] As for the bishop, Charles treated him with unconcealed disdain. The mitre and the stole were but a poor excuse for pusillanimity in the successor of Henry of Gueldres and many another brave soldier, who had ruled the bishopric of Liége in former times, and whose hands had been more familiar with the knightly lance than with the pastoral staff. But it was the honour not of Louis of Bourbon, but of Charles of Burgundy, that was now at stake; and preparations were made for renewing the war in a manner that should show the rebels with whom they had to deal. The summons to the field was sent abroad by heralds, who bore in one hand a flaming torch, in the other a

[2] Chastellain, p. 434.

naked sword—tokens of the merciless spirit in which the contest was to be waged.[3]

Was there any reason to suppose that the King of France would step forward, at this juncture, to fulfil, at last, the pledges so often broken and so often renewed? He had a large force still on foot in Normandy and Champagne. Dammartin, with several hundred lances, was posted at Mezières, in the near neighbourhood of Liége, with the ostensible purpose of protecting the frontiers against the predatory bands that infested all the adjacent territory, to whatever party it belonged. His secret instructions, no doubt, were of a different purport, but obscure in tenour and expression. The chief object of his presence at this point, as he well understood, must be to give courage to the people of Liége, and to overawe the aggressor. But was he, at the decisive moment, to remain a mere spectator, or to join them in resisting the attack? This was more than he himself could tell; and it was in vain that he applied to Louis for more definite orders.[4] The king, however, was not idle. He despatched more than one embassy to Charles, requesting him to suspend his preparations. A papal legate resident in France was persuaded to undertake a similar mission. It was scarcely to be expected that these appeals would have any effect in shaking the determination of the duke. Nevertheless, in making them, the king was perfectly sincere. He had the interests of his allies too deeply

[3] "Tenoient en une main une espée toute nuë, et en l'autre une torche alumée, qui signifoit guerre de feu et de sang." De Troyes, Lenglet, tom. ii. p. 66.

[4] "Envoyez-moy plus ample puissance que n'avez fait dernierement, et me mandez comme je m'y gouverneray, et je le feray, et en cela et en toutes autres choses." Lettre de Dammartin au Roy, Lenglet, tom. ii. p. 632.

at heart to abandon their cause without endeavouring to obtain a substantial equivalent in return. With this object in view he intrusted the matter to the negotiation of the Constable Saint-Pol.

Louis of Luxembourg, Count of Saint-Pol, was the representative of a family which had given a line of kings to Bohemia and of emperors to Germany. His vast estates lay chiefly in Picardy, the border land of France and Belgium, and, in fact, a debatable land, having afforded a subject of contention to the sovereigns of these two countries, and having already thrice passed from the possession of the one into that of the other. On the last occasion Saint-Pol himself had been mainly instrumental in effecting the transfer. By his influence with the nobles of the province, among whom he was the first both in rank and wealth, he had secured their defection from the royal cause and their adherence to that of the confederates.

From childhood he had been trained to war and familiarized with its most cruel and revolting features.[5] Haughty, stern, ambitious, luxurious in his habits, famed for valour and prowess, and well skilled in the military tactics of the age, he might have seemed, at first sight, the very type of the feudal warrior. But, whether from the latent instincts of his nature or the necessities of his situation, the part he played in later life was one

[5] It is related of him that, when a boy, he was compelled by his uncle and guardian, a noted partisan chieftain, to hew off the heads of a batch of prisoners, as they knelt in the courtyard of his castle with their hands tied behind their backs. Duncan of Knockdunder, as the reader may remember, was desirous of giving a similar lesson to young David Butler. "Tavie, my dear, you hae smelled pouther for the first time this day—take my sword and hack off Donacha's head, whilk will be coot practice for you against the time you may wish to do the same kindness to a living shentleman." Heart of Midlothian.

that demanded a supple disposition, consummate address, and a mind thoroughly versed in all the stratagems of policy.

His personal relations with the two great rivals between whom he stood, were no less ambiguous than his position and his character. A vassal of the house of Burgundy, he had aspired to power and distinction at the court of Philip the Good. But his pretensions, founded on lofty birth and hereditary wealth, were too openly displayed to suit the taste of Philip, who was ever more ready to remind him of the protection for which he was indebted to his sovereign than to promote his ambitious views. On the other hand, the Croys, whom Saint-Pol, as we have seen, regarded with disdain, monopolized the ducal favour and were advanced to the highest offices in the state. He therefore attached himself to the Count of Charolais, then brooding over similar repulses, became his chosen counsellor and confidant, joined him in overthrowing the Croys, assisted him in raising forces to attack the king of France, and rendered essential services in the War of the Public Weal.

His reward for these services had been the sword of France, bestowed on him by the monarch against whom his own sword had so lately been unsheathed. This was a dazzling elevation, but one calculated rather to stimulate than to satisfy ambition such as his. The office of constable, if it were not worn merely as an empty honour, must bring him into the closest personal connection with Louis. His place was at the king's side, in the cabinet and in the field;[6] and in this position

[6] "C'estoit le seul bras destre du roy, et le vrai coffre de son secré." Chastellain, p. 458.

there was no height of influence or power which he might not hope to reach. But he was still the vassal of Burgundy. His sons, in accordance with a common custom, had been educated at the court of Burgundy, and now filled places in the ducal household. His estates in Picardy, which had for a brief period been incorporated with the domain of France, had again, through his own efforts, been restored to the Burgundian rule. By the same act he had rendered back his allegiance to the duke and bound himself by new ties to the king.

To serve two such masters as these might well be thought impossible. Yet to make an election between them was not easy. He dared not renounce his feudal obligations to the one; neither could he turn away from the bright prospects which the other presented to his view. All that was required of him by Charles was the duty of a vassal; all that he could expect in return was the protection which the suzerain was bound to render to his vassal. Personal influence over that haughty and self-reliant mind,—an admission to participate in its dreams of conquest and of glory,—he could scarcely hope to obtain. Louis, on the other hand, overflowed with gratitude to those who embraced his cause. He unlocked to them the secrets of his heart—or seemed to do so. His fertile intellect devised schemes for their advancement more brilliant than their most daring hopes could have conceived. In a word, the one looked coldly on the ambition of his friends, the other fanned it to a livelier flame.

In the year 1466, Saint-Pol, being then a widower, had offered his hand to Margaret of Bourbon, a sister-in-law of Charles, who had been bred at the Bur-

gundian court, where she still resided. His proposals were rejected—the lady, perhaps, not choosing to wed a man whose years nearly doubled hers, and the duke having as little inclination to see the aspiring blood of Luxembourg united with a stream in which he had mingled his own. The King of France had no fear or jealousy of this kind. In the ducal house of Savoy, with which, as we have seen, he himself was doubly allied, he found a wife for Saint-Pol, another for the constable's son, and a husband for his daughter. He gave him the lieutenancy of Normandy, the post once held by the Count of Charolais. Like the manager of a theatre, who changes the casts of his pieces in order to test the various merits of his performers, Louis now assigned to Saint-Pol the part which had before been so unskilfully played by Nevers. He was to be a bulwark against the house of Burgundy, a check upon its movements, a thorn in its side. Personally he might be made useful as a go-between—professing equal love to both parties, but in fact devoted to the interests of the king, as those with which his own ulterior views, if not his present fortunes, were identified.

It was in the guise, therefore, of a mediator, rather than of an envoy, that Saint-Pol now appeared before the duke to make such representations as might induce the latter to consent to an accommodation with his sovereign. The tone he affected was that of a good and loyal vassal, whose duty it was to tender his best advice to a young and inexperienced prince, to whom he was bound alike by the ties of allegiance and by those of personal affection. He began accordingly by intimating that, in recommencing the war

against Liége, Charles would be giving just cause of complaint to the King of France, who regarded the people of that state as his allies, included in the existing treaties, and entitled, in case they should be attacked, to his assistance and protection. "Fair cousin," exclaimed the duke, stopping at once these diplomatic feints, such as he seldom listened to with patience, "hold, I pray you, and speak to me no longer in this strain. Whatever may be before me, whatever fortune Heaven may design for me, I will set my army in the field and will march it against Liége. I will know, once for all, whether I am to be master or varlet. Whoever wishes to turn me from this purpose, or to throw any impediment in my way, let him come, in God's name; I shall be prepared to meet him."[1] This interruption did not put an end to the constable's meanderings, but merely turned them into a somewhat different course. The king, he said, could not be blamed for interposing in behalf of a people with whom he was connected by ancient bonds of friendship and alliance, and who besieged him daily with petitions and entreaties for assistance, and with reproaches for the apparent indifference with which he had twice already seen them attacked and overthrown. The duke might well content himself with the triumphs he had already gained, with the blood that had been already shed. Let him remember the instability of fortune, and seek glory rather by re-establishing the prosperity of this unhappy

[1] "Beau cousin, tenez-vous-en à tant et ne m'en parlez plus, car quelque chose que avenir me doie, ne qu'il plaira à Dieu m'en envoyer, je mettrai mon armée sur les champs, et la tournerai en Liége; si sçarai à ceste fois se je serai maistre ou varlet. Et dont et qui m'en vouldra destourner et y mettre empeichement, viengne, de par Dieu soit! et il me trouverà pour respondre." Chastellain, p. 437.

people than by their utter ruin and desolation. Charles listened to the long harangue of which this was the substance with an air of moody resolution. Its hypocrisy was too shallow to bewilder so clear an intellect. "The king," he at length exclaimed, "desires that the people of Liége should remain at peace. Why, then, does he not put a stop to the outrages which they daily commit? Why does he not restrain their violence? Is it I who have broken the peace? What new provocation have I given them that has led them to invade my dominions, lay waste my territories, and harass my subjects? But lately they have seized in Luxembourg a gentleman of the country, one of my vassals, tortured him, and put him to death. Enough, fair cousin. I shall never again know joy at heart till I have taken vengeance for these insults. There is neither king nor emperor who shall turn me from this emprise." [8]

Thus foiled in both attacks, Saint-Pol now shifted his ground and chose another method of approach. He turned the conversation on the subject of the general relations between France and Burgundy, lamenting the absence of that cordiality which ought to exist between princes so nearly connected by blood, and hinting that Charles, in seeking an alliance with the English, had estranged himself from the interests of France, and wounded the honour of that royal house from which he was himself descended, and whose rights he was bound to uphold. This was a reproach to which the duke could not be altogether insensible, conscious as he was that, in imitating the policy of his grandfather, John the Fearless, rather than that of his father, Philip the Good, he was running counter to the instincts of

[8] Chastellain, p. 438.

the French nation, and could scarcely expect to carry with him the sympathies even of his own vassals. Following up his advantage, the constable ended with a proposal to extinguish all present differences between the king and the duke by a truce of a year's duration, in which the allies of either party should be included. "The king's allies!" replied Charles, with undisguised sarcasm; "who are they? If Liége be meant, I have already given you an answer." Then, referring to the accusation which had touched him nearest, he protested that it was the course pursued by the French monarch —the hostility he had ever shown to the princes of the blood—which had driven him to a step doubly repugnant to his feelings, compelling a member of the house of Valois to ally himself with England, a descendant of the house of Lancaster to intermarry with that of York. In conclusion, the most he would consent to was a truce of six months, provided that it should embrace also the dukes of Normandy and Brittany. The limit which he set was a sufficient indication of his ulterior intentions.[9]

While his envoy remained at Brussels Louis plied him with messages day after day, making inquiries in regard to the state of the negotiation. Failing the proposals he had already sent, there remained an alternative proposition which he designed to put forward when the proper moment should arrive. He now summoned the constable to Paris, where he detained him, however, but a single night, and again despatched him to his post. Saint-Pol found the duke preparing to quit Brussels for Louvain, the place appointed for the muster of the different levies; and

[9] Chastellain, pp. 438, 439.

thither he accompanied him. The warlike host had already assembled.[10] The fields around the town were white with tents; while the streets were crowded with troops and with trains of baggage wagons and artillery. No other country could, in that age, have furnished, at short notice, so numerous and well-appointed an army; and only in that age, and under the system of military tenure, could such an army have been raised in a country of no greater extent. Besides the men-at-arms and the mounted archers whom the holders of fiefs were bound to bring into the field, the towns had contributed pikemen and other infantry in quotas proportioned to their population. If we could credit the statement of a chronicler who served in the campaign, the whole force, including camp-followers, amounted to a hundred thousand men.[11] Words were no longer needed to proclaim the unalterable purpose of the duke. But doubtless he would be well content to learn that, in the execution of that purpose, he would encounter no opposition from the king. This assurance the royal envoy was now prepared to give. He demanded only, in return, that Charles should remain equally indifferent while Louis took measures for bringing to a settlement his present differences with the Duke of Brittany. In other words, he proposed to the Burgundian prince to imitate his own policy by deserting his allies at the

[10] Chastellain, p. 442.

[11] "A celle fois le duc avoit trente mille payes aux champs passez à monstre; de quoy il faut deux archers à cheval pour une paye, ... sans compter les autres suivants un camp, et dont l'on ne se peut passer, de sorte, que l'on tient qu'il avoit en son armée bien cent mille hommes." Haynin, tom. i. p. 82.—"Son armee estoit tres grosse: car tout ce qui estoit peu venir de Bourgongne, s'estoit venu joindre avec luy: et ne luy veiz jamais tant de gens ensemble, à beaucoup pres." Commines, tom. i. p. 124.

moment of their necessity. Had Louis himself been present, plausible and subtle arguments would not have been wanting to obscure the true character of this proposal. He had not yet learned how all such refinements were wasted on a straightforward and resolute mind. Broached by Saint-Pol, the offer was met by a sharp and absolute refusal; and, as he continued to press it, Charles turned upon him a warning glance, and reminded him that, though constable of France, he was still the subject of the house of Burgundy. "The fairest of your possessions," he said, "lie in my dominions. Your son is present with me in the camp. Had I been so minded, I might have summoned you to the field in person; and that summons you dared not have disregarded. Reflect well on what you do, fair cousin; for assuredly, if the king meddles with my affairs, it will not be to your advantage." [12]

This menace had for the moment its effect. Saint-Pol felt that he was treading a slippery path. He hastened to disavow the mission with which he had been intrusted, protested his unfaltering devotion to his rightful sovereign, and promised, in returning to France, to employ himself more efficiently in the service of the duke than if he were to accompany him in his expedition, by using his best exertions to prevent the king from violating the existing truce. The lightning of Charles's eye subsided; but his mien and language were cold and repellent. "I could well desire," he replied, "that the king should abstain from taking part against me with these rebellious villains, excommunicated by the express sentence of our Holy Father. Neverthe-

[12] "Si que, pensez bien à vostre cas: car se le roy se veult meller au fort de ma guerre, si ne sera ce point à vostre preu." Chastellain, p. 442.

less, I leave him to act as he shall think necessary. And for you, fair cousin, I do not interfere with your course. It may be profitable to both parties; but, however you may shape it, you will receive no instructions or commands from me." [13]

The impression left by this conversation on the mind of Saint-Pol could not but be that of unqualified chagrin. Standing between princes thus hostile, thus matched, and dependent on both, he aspired, by a dexterous use of his position, to obtain an influence over each—to be the mediator between them, and the umpire of their quarrel. Such an influence he might suppose himself to have gained over the mind of Louis; for that prince was ready enough to yield a show of ascendancy to those who, in fact, were merely the instruments of his designs. But the haughty and unbending character of Charles rejected even the shadow of control; and, while he exacted the service that was his due, he looked with a chilling indifference on the exuberant demonstrations of an officious zeal. It was in this manner that he had received the excuses and advances of the constable, when, by a different course, their former amity would have been restored. Saint-Pol might well contrast such treatment with the marks of confidence and friendship which he was accustomed to receive from the king. But this thought only deepened his mortification, as he reflected on the failure of his mission and the unsatisfactory account which he must carry back to Paris—a feeling that predominated over every other when he waited on the duke to take leave of him, and found him equipped for the field and in the act of mounting his horse. Turning towards

[13] Chastellain, p. 443.

the constable with a meaning look, Charles expressed his desire, in the hearing of those who stood by, that, during his absence, the king would refrain from offering any molestation to the Duke of Brittany. "Monseigneur," exclaimed Saint-Pol, "you leave us no choice; you bid us remain quiet and not attack our enemies, while you choose your own time to march against yours. It cannot be; the king will not endure it." Charles preserved his cool demeanour; but his reply was trenchant and decisive. "The people of Liége," he said, "are assembled; within three days I expect to have a battle. If I lose it, I doubt not that you will act your pleasure; but if I win, you will leave the Bretons in peace."[14] With this answer, which showed that he clearly understood the state of his adversary's game, he mounted his horse and rode off.

The first corps, or advanced guard, under the Sire de Ravenstein, had already crossed the frontier, and commenced the war of "fire and blood" which had been proclaimed by the heralds.[15] The fields were laid waste, the villages plundered and burned, and the inhabitants put to the sword. Even convents and other sacred edifices were not exempted from pillage by these defenders of the Church.[16] An attempt was also made

[14] "Les Liegois sont assemblez, et m'attens d'avoir la bataille avant qu'il soit trois jours. Si je la pers, je croy bien que vous ferez à vostre guise; mais aussi, si je la gaigne, vous laisserez en paix les Bretons." Commines, tom. i. p. 123.

[15] "Commencèrent à brusler dedans le pays de Liége en divers lieux, et mettre tout au sac, espée et flamme." Haynin, tom. i. p. 82.

[16] See the particulars in Henricus de Merica, De Ram, pp. 164, 165.—He adds, as something scarcely less than miraculous, that the nuns, though despoiled even of their wearing apparel, were enabled to preserve their chastity—a fact indicative of the influence which Charles's well known sentiments exercised over his followers even in his absence. "Tam procax insolentia, ut ancillas Christi ad exuendum vestimenta rigorose compellerent. . . . Dicebant enim imperatorie ad illas

to surprise Huy; but the town had been strongly garrisoned, and the resistance was animated by the presence of Pentecôte d'Arkel, the wife of Raes de Heers, a woman of masculine character and of those martial instincts in which her husband was notoriously deficient.[17] Charles, with the main body of the army, entered the principality by the same route as in his first expedition. Crossing La Hesbaye, which, like the Scottish border-land in the olden time, had been for ages the scene of a perpetual predatory warfare, and of which the proverb said that "He who enters it to-day must expect a combat on the morrow,"[18] he prepared to lay siege to Saint-Trond, the town where he had before made his head-quarters, but where a garrison of three thousand men, commanded by an experienced officer, now manned the walls and refused his summons to surrender.

In the mean time a force hastily mustered in the capital had been sent out to meet the invaders. It consisted of some twenty thousand men, nearly all foot soldiers, armed with long pikes and with culverins—a

scurri: 'Exuite vos sine mora.' At illæ inexorabiles hostes aspicientes, coram facie eorum exuebant se vestimenta sua ad camissam usque. . . . Sed quis non obstupescat magno Dei munere factum esse, ut cum bona mobilia perdere cogerentur, thesaurum castitatis incomparabilem integerrime conservarent, nec illarum ulla, quantumlibet speciosa, reperta est pati violentiam."

[17] Adrianus de Veteri-Bosco, Ampliss. Col., tom. iv. p. 1316.—Johannes de Los, who in his boyhood had seen this "Jezebel," as he calls her, retained a vivid impression of her fierce and haughty bearing. His mother, the wife of a wealthy exile, went, with her six children, to present a petition to De Heers and his wife. The internecine nature of the struggle of parties in Liége is shown by the answer. "'Melius enim esse,' inquiunt, 'quam tu et tui mendicitati sint obnoxii et pereant, quam nos nostrique, vobis procurantibus, extra patriam profugati mendicemus præ egestate et pereamus inhonest.'" De Ram, p. 49.

[18] "Que nul ne passe le Habsbain, qu'il ne soit combatu le lendemain." Lamarche, tom. ii. p. 273.

name then applied not, as at a later period, to a species of cannon, but to a rude kind of musket. The chiefs were Raes de Heers, Barre Surlet, and other prominent agitators. The Sire dé Bierlo, a man of undoubted bravery, carried the great standard of Saint Lambert.

The two armies reached the neighbourhood of Saint-Trond almost simultaneously. The duke appeared before that town on the afternoon of October 27; and the enemy reached Brusten, a village half a league distant, on the same evening. On the following morning Charles drew up his forces in order of battle. It was all-important that, on this occasion, his arms should meet with no reverse. The king was watching every movement; a royal envoy, the bailiff of Lyons, was present in the enemy's ranks, and Dammartin, close at hand, waited only for a signal to take part in the contest. Moreover, the *prestige* of victory was necessary to a new prince leading his vassals to the field in person. He therefore made his dispositions with the greatest care—no longer, as at Montlhéry, ambitious to exhibit his personal prowess, but aspiring to the reputation of a skilful and experienced commander. Mounted on a small horse, he rode from troop to troop, giving his orders to his officers from a written paper which he carried in his hand. The ground was level, but intersected in various places by an extensive morass. Ditches and hedgerows, which formed the boundaries of the fields around the village, also offered impediments to the movements of cavalry. A few thousand men, including five hundred English archers, remained under the walls of Saint-Trond, in case a sally should be attempted by the garrison; Ravenstein, with the corps under his command, was sent forward to the attack;

while the remaining divisions were held in reserve, but so posted as to form a new front of battle on ground better suited to the operations of such a force. In case, therefore, the first corps was driven back, the further the enemy advanced the greater the resistance he would encounter and the more certain his defeat.[19]

The men of Liége were well supplied with artillery; and, as the Burgundian troops made their approach through a wood that skirted the road, the branches crashed around them, and echoes from every glade multiplied the reports.[20] At length the open fields were reached. A halt was called. The archers dismounted, and, picking their way across the marsh, began, with well-directed volleys, to drive back the parties of the enemy posted behind the hedges and to capture the artillery. But, as soon as their arrows and other missiles were spent, they were forced to retreat in turn; for the men-at-arms, who should have advanced to their support, were unable to find a passage for their horses, and the enemy's pikemen, closing their ranks, and charging with shouts of triumph, drove all before them, killed a considerable number, and threw the whole corps into confusion.[21]

The Burgundian ensigns wavered and turned, and it seemed as if the day were lost.[22] But the excellence of the duke's arrangements was now made apparent. The archers of the "battle," or main corps, unsheathing

[19] Haynin, tom. i. pp. 84, 85.—Lamarche, tom. ii. pp. 273, 274.—Commines, tom. i. p. 127.

[20] "Le bruict . . . . . estoit le plus hideux que n'oyz jamais, à cause du coup qui en redondoit comme en serrent le son dedans lesdictz arbres, et qui donnoit souvent à l'encontre desdictz arbres et branches." Haynin, tom. i. p. 86.

[21] Commines, tom. i. p. 128.—Haynin, ubi supra.

[22] "Branloient toutes nos enseignes, comme gens presque desconfitz." Commines, ubi supra.

the long two-handed swords which they used in close combat, raised a loud cheer, and assailed the advancing pikemen with such impetuosity that in a moment these half-trained soldiers were discomfited and scattered.[23] The panic soon spread through the whole army. De Heers was among the first to fly. Here and there some more courageous leader rallied his men and made a momentary stand. Barre Surlet was slain; Bierlo was wounded; but the great standard, torn, and soiled with dust, was carried off by the fugitives. The cannons, tents, and wagons were all captured. The pursuit, however, soon closed; for night came on, and the same obstacles which had prevented the cavalry from taking any efficient part in the battle rendered it impossible for them to follow up the victory.[24]

The slain were variously estimated at from two to nine thousand. The lowest number is the most likely to have been correct.[25] But chance alone had saved the forces of Liége from extermination.[26] As it was, their defeat had been decisive. As soon as he had retired to his quarters the duke called for his secre-

[23] Lamarche, tom. ii. p. 274.—Commines, ubi supra.

[24] Lettre du Duc aux magistrats d'Ypres; Lettres de Louis Van den Rive et Jean de Halewyn; Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. i. pp. 168-172.—Haynin. — Commines. — Lamarche. Henricus de Merica; Theodoricus Paulus; De Ram, pp. 166, 167, 208.—The pusillanimity exhibited by De Heers is noticed by several of the authorities. "N'avoit point la grâce," remarks Haynin, "estre renommé pour le plus hardi chevalier."

[25] Commines, after giving six thousand as the number reported, adds, "Qui semble beaucoup à toutes gens qui ne veullent point mentir," and notices the usual tendency to exaggeration on such occasions. Two letter-writers from the Burgundian camp agree in estimating the slain on the enemy's side at about four thousand. Charles himself says only, "En y a eu grant nombre de mors."

[26] "N'eust esté la nuyt qui survint, il eu fut eschappé bien peu." Lettre du Duc, Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. i. p. 169.—"Si ce n'eust esté la nuict, il en fust mort plus de quinze mil." Commines, tom. i. p. 129.

tary, and dictated a letter to the Constable Saint-Pol acquainting him with the result of the combat, and renewing his request, or rather warning, that the king should refrain from carrying into effect his hostile designs against the Bretons.[27]

On the third day after the battle, Saint-Trond, having no longer any prospect of relief, opened its gates. A fine was imposed upon the town, several of the inhabitants were put to death, and the fortifications were ordered to be razed. The army then resumed its march, scathing the country through which it passed with flames and devastation. The people, fleeing at its approach, sought refuge in the capital, from which the timid had already begun to escape in search of a more secure place of shelter. Tongres and other large towns followed the example of Saint-Trond, and surrendered at discretion. On the 9th of November the duke reached Othée, at no great distance from the capital, and the scene of the great victory which, sixty years before, his ancestor John the Fearless had gained over the people of the principality.[28] Elated with their easy successes, and with the prospect of the greater conquest that awaited them, the lords and captains spent the night in revelry,—dancing, drinking, and playing at dice,—staking their respective shares of the anticipated spoils of Liége.[29]

Yet it was still uncertain whether the enterprise would be crowned with success. As in his first expedition, the lateness of the season and the difficulty of obtaining supplies made it almost impossible for the duke to hold his forces together, and seemed to forbid

[27] Commines, tom. i. p. 130.
[28] Ancien Chronique, Lenglet, tom. ii. p. 190.
[29] Haynin, tom. i. p. 95.

the idea of his laying siege to so strong a place, if it should meet his summons with defiance.[30] He trusted, however, that the panic and confusion which prevailed among the inhabitants would prevent their making any preparations for defence. The whole city, indeed, was a scene of tumult. Mutual recriminations distracted the counsels of the leaders. The people no longer obeyed the orders or listened to the persuasions of those whose audacity was ever conspicuous save in the hour of danger. The fate which Dinant had incurred by a hopeless resistance haunted the imaginations of all, and stifled every spark of patriotism and of courage. Numbers quitted the town, and sought safety and concealment in the forests. The men of property clamoured for peace; and the clergy took the initiative by sending some of their body to make their peace with the bishop, who had accompanied the army, and to request his intercession with the Burgundian prince.[31]

Charles at first demanded an unconditional surrender. But, moved by the entreaties that were made to him, he at length gave a pledge that the town should be saved from destruction, and the houses exempted from pillage. On all other points he reserved the declaration of his will until after his admission. In the mean time he continued to advance, and, two days later, (November 11,) took up his quarters at the distance of half a league from the walls. Here he was met by a deputation of the principal citizens, come to deprecate his resentment and to tender submission on behalf of the inhabitants. But, as it was still doubtful whether this could be regarded as the act of the whole popula-

[30] Commines, tom. i. p. 138.

[31] Adrianus de Veteri-Bosco Ampliss. Col., tom. iv. pp. 1317, 1318.

tion, Humbercourt, taking with him several of these deputies and a small body of troops, went forward, on the same evening, to the gate of Saint-Martin, and demanded entrance. This being refused, he took his station in a convent, just outside the wall, as a convenient post from which to gain some information of the true state of affairs within. His situation, however, was a critical one; for the ground was rugged, the night dark, and, if attacked by a superior force, it would neither be easy for him to retreat nor to receive succour from the camp. "About nine o'clock," says Philippe de Commines, who was present with this little party, "we heard the alarm-bell ring, and suspected that they were about to sally out upon us. And, in fact, this suspicion was not unfounded; for they were deliberating on the matter, and some were ready to assail us, while others opposed it." The sagacious Humbercourt prepared a conciliatory letter, which he sent into the town by three of the burghers whom he had brought with him. "If we can divert their attention till midnight," he remarked, "they will grow tired and sleepy; and those who wish to attack us will begin to think of providing for their own safety." "Soon afterwards," continues the narrator, "we heard the bell of the palace sound, which calls the citizens together for discussion, and knew that our envoys were managing the business according to their instructions. They did not return; but, at the end of an hour, there was a great noise about the gate, and a crowd who had collected on the wall assailed us with abusive cries. Then my lord of Humbercourt perceived that our peril was imminent." He therefore despatched the four other burghers with a long letter, reminding the

people of the friendly terms on which he had lived with them, assuring them of his protection, and imploring them not to bring down utter ruin on their heads by further resistance. The suspense lasted until two hours after midnight. Then the bell was again heard—the signal for the citizens to disperse. The deliberation had ended; Liége had resolved upon submission. As soon as the assembly had broken up De Heers and many of his party, to the number of four or five thousand, fled precipitately from the town.[32]

On the following day the place was formally surrendered. Three hundred and forty of the citizens, kneeling in their shirts, their heads and feet uncovered, delivered up the keys to the duke, and supplicated him for pardon. But his pride was unsatisfied with this humiliation. The gates, by his order, were removed from their hinges and laid on the ground. A portion of the wall on either side was also taken down. Across this breach, trampling on the prostrate gates, the troops made their entrance in all the insolence of conquest. Charles rode in the midst of his nobles, his sword unsheathed, his armour covered by a rich mantle of velvet studded with precious stones. On his right hand was the bishop. The clergy, themselves a multitude in this "paradise of priests,"[33] lined one side of the way, dressed in their surplices, and bearing lighted candles in their hands. On the opposite side were the people, mute, downcast, yet expectant, ranged in prescribed order—the cross of Saint Andrew, the hated badge of Burgundy, displayed on every breast. The

[32] Commines, tom. i. pp. 134-137. —Adrianus, Ampliss. Col., tom. iv. p. 1319.—Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. i. p. 181.

[33] Guicciardini, p. 495.

procession lasted from nine in the morning till four in the afternoon. The only audible sounds were the orders of the officers and the regular tramp of men and horses; for, the duke being still in mourning for his father, the jubilant strains of the trumpet, usually heard on such occasions, had been forbidden to swell his triumph.[34]

The same deliberation and rigorous show of justice that had before characterized the proceedings of the Burgundian prince marked his conduct on the present occasion. The engagements which he had made were scrupulously observed. The soldiers were forbidden to plunder; and such of them as ventured to violate the command were instantly hanged.[35] It might even be said that he tempered justice with clemency. The lives of the inhabitants, in regard to which he had refused to grant any stipulations, were, with a few exceptions, spared. It was on the city itself—on all, at least, that had given to it an existence and a history—that the doom of death was to be pronounced. On the morning of the 26th the bell was rung that had so often called the burghers together in their usual place of assembly to exercise the rights of freemen. On an elevated platform sat the duke in state, the bishop beside him, the principal nobles standing round. Charles's secretary read "the judgment and sentence" of his master, "word by word, in a loud and distinct tone." The "customs" of Liége—that is to say, its constitution and its laws—were by this instrument pronounced "bad," and were for ever abrogated. All the fran-

[34] Haynin, tom. i. pp. 96-98.—Commines, tom. i. p. 140.—Meyer, Annales Flandriæ, fol. 342 verso.—Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. i. pp. 179, 182.

[35] "Furent deux archers pendus," complains Haynin, "l'un pour avoir robbé un mouton, l'autre pour choses de guères meilleure importance." Tom. i. p. 98.

chises of the people, their charters and their privileges of every kind, were declared to be forfeited and annulled. The existing tribunals were dissolved. The municipal government was done away with. The guilds were disincorporated. The walls and fortifications were to be demolished, so that Liége might henceforth be open, "like a village or a country town," on every side.[36]

In place of the various codes, usages, and methods of administration, which, whatever their defects, had been parts of a living body, interwoven with the thoughts and habits of a people, a very simple system was established. Justice was, in all cases, to be administered according to the theories and practices of the "written law," the "law of reason"—that is to say, the civil or Roman law. It was to be executed by officers appointed by the bishop, who were also to take an oath of fidelity to the duke. The latter, as had already been agreed upon by treaty, was to be the sovereign "Protector" of the state, with the right to call upon the inhabitants for military service, and to suppress mutiny and civil commotions.

The reading of the act being finished, the question was put to the people whether they accepted and were resolved to abide by it. The notaries who sign it make their attestation that no objection was offered—that, to the best of their belief, all hands and voices were raised in token of assent.[37] Among the charters thus abolished,

[36] Instrument notarié contenant la sentence prononcé contre le pays de Liége, Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. ii. pp. 437-472.

[37] "Adonc ilz respondirent tous à haulte vois, sans nesun contredisant, que [comme] il sambloit, disant 'oy! oy!' et, leurs mains ainsi levees en hault, ils juront [jurèrent] solempnement d'eulx entretenir, garder et accomplir à la maniere susdicte." Ibid., p. 470.

without opposition, without a murmur, were some which had been won in long and desperate struggles and sealed with the blood of thousands. The bishop and the canons, being called upon in turn, gave a formal expression of their approval. The duke then spoke a few words, promising favour and protection if deserved. Of his intentions in the opposite contingency a significant warning was afforded by the decapitation, some days later, on the same spot, of nine persons excepted from the general pardon.[38]

This warning was the more necessary, since Charles had no other means of giving effect to his measures and enforcing a compliance with the treaty than the terror inspired by his presence and the impression he might leave at his departure. He had no standing army in his pay. He could not leave behind him a sufficient force to subdue every hope of further resistance and to crush the first symptoms of renewed disaffection. His levies were raised for a limited term, for service in actual war, for the purpose of striking a single blow; and therefore that blow, when struck, must be vigorous and effectual. Nor could he remain longer to superintend in person the execution of his decrees. That counterstroke by which the king, on a former occasion, in sacrificing Liége had recovered Normandy, had taught his rival the danger of abandoning his guard even for a single moment. Leaving Humbercourt behind him, with a fresh commission of the same tenor as the former one, Charles accordingly quitted Liége, on the 28th of November. Before his departure he had directed that the Perron, the symbol of those liberties which he had destroyed, should be

[38] Adrianus, Ampliss. Col., tom. iv.—Havnin. tom. i. p. 100.

removed from its place in the palace square. He carried this pillar with him to the Netherlands, and caused it to be set up at Bruges, in the centre of the Exchange—a spot frequented by strangers from every clime, who would see in it a trophy of his conquest, and who might read, in the inscription placed upon its base, a warning to such as drank too deeply of the cup of Freedom and grew intoxicated with its fumes.[39]

"Desine sublimes vultus attolere in auras,
Disce meo casu perpetuum esse nihil.
Nobilitatis ego Leodis venerabile signum,
Gentis et inuictæ gloria nuper eram:
Sum modò spectaclum ridentis turpe popelli,
Et testor Caroli me cecidisse manu."

—Meyer, Annales Flandriæ, fol. 342 verso.

CHAPTER III.

CHARLES'S HOUSEHOLD AND MODE OF GOVERNMENT. — HIS MARRIAGE WITH MARGARET OF YORK. — HOSTILE DEMONSTRATIONS OF LOUIS. — HIS VISIT TO PÉRONNE.

1468.

FROM the moment when intelligence had reached him of the death of Philip the Good, the king had been engaged in active preparations for a new struggle with his powerful and discontented vassals. A new league, he doubted not, was forming against him. The courts of Burgundy, of Brittany, and of England, were in close alliance and constant communication. The claims of Charles of France were again to serve as the pretext for hostilities; and Normandy, as before, would be the chief theatre of the contest, and the prize of the victorious party.

But at least Louis was not again to be taken at a disadvantage. He had a great army on foot. Normandy was filled with troops, and the frontier on either side was carefully guarded. Paris was kept in a posture of defence; and the houses of Bourbon and Anjou being now attached to the royal cause, no outbreak was to be apprehended in the central or southern parts of the kingdom.

Nor were the plans of Louis confined to measures of resistance. If in actual war he commonly stood on the defensive, in policy he was always bold, always on the

offensive, always busy in contriving schemes for harassing and weakening his enemies. Through the agency of Warwick, now his secret pensioner and ally, he was preparing the materials for another civil war in England, which might burst forth at any moment, if Edward should give active aid to the confederates or attempt the invasion of France. He had endeavoured, in like manner, to find employment at home for the Duke of Burgundy, by exciting insurrections in Brabant and setting up the Count of Nevers as a pretender to that duchy. He had, unhappily, been more successful in inciting Liége to another vain and desperate effort for the recovery of her independence, but without deriving from this success the fruits which he had expected. He had failed to shake the alliance between the Dukes of Burgundy and Brittany. He had, indeed, seized the opportunity of Charles's absence to make a demonstration against Francis, hoping to overawe the latter, and compel him to deliver up the heir to the crown and to abandon the league. But the Burgundian victory at Brusten had dashed his hopes on the eve of their fulfilment. A few weeks had sufficed for the reduction of Liége. Early in December the duke had returned to the Netherlands; and his vassals were summoned to reassemble at Saint-Quentin, in Picardy, on the 16th of the same month.[1] The king was, therefore, obliged to desist from his intended attack, and turn to meet the assault with which he was himself threatened from an opposite quarter. Charles, however, content for the moment with having fended off the blow aimed at his allies, postponed the assembling of his troops, and turned his attention to his domestic affairs, which, in

[1] Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. i. p. 183.

the first interval of tranquillity since his accession, demanded his immediate care.

The Burgundian court had never worn so animated an appearance as in the spring and summer of 1468. It was thronged with envoys from foreign states, with deputations from provinces and towns, with solicitors for offices and pensions, for pardons and rewards. The prince, though still young, was held in the first consideration among European sovereigns. With the splendour of his inherited position and the glory he derived from his immediate predecessor were combined the *éclat* of his own achievements and the reputation of a bold and aspiring disposition.[2] He was regarded as the representative of chivalry and the champion of feudalism; but governments like that of Venice, which regulated their conduct by the nicest rules of a scientific policy, saw the importance of cultivating the friendship of a sovereign whose power was already so considerable, and who had given such proofs of his determination to extend its limits.

During several months Charles was busily employed in remodelling his household, in regulating his finances, and in correcting what he considered to have been the abuses of his father's administration. He maintained an establishment on the same scale, indeed, as that of Philip, with the same state, the same pompous etiquette, the same multitude of officers and personal attendants. But, in place of the wasteful expenditure, the unbounded gaiety, and festal profusion of the former reign, he introduced a severe decorum, a strict discipline, an exact

[2] "Avecques gloire paternelle qui lui réverberoit en face, si estoit-il jà famé, et doubté, et manifié par terre et par mer pour ses principes." Chastellain, p. 446.

outlay, a rigorous examination of service and compensation. The salaries were liberal, but proportioned to the duties demanded and performed. Nothing dropped from an open hand too careless to select the objects of its benefactions; nothing was winked at by an eye that feared or disdained the office of critical investigation.[3] Pomp and ceremony which, in Philip's court, had been so elaborated and diffused as to conceal every other purpose beneath that of decoration, had now their visible uses as supports of a structure raised on no irregular or grotesque plan.

There existed in Charles's mind a clear and precise conception of those ideas in which the scheme of a noble or princely household, with its immense variety of forms and usages, had originated. In such a household the regulation of a family was combined with the transaction of important business, with the management of a great landed estate, or of what was, in fact, the same thing, a *state*—for the tenancy of land implied the obligations of vassalage, and the right to dispose of lands subject to such obligations implied the feudal notion of lordship or sovereignty. The sovereign granted his lands to his kinsmen and dependants as the reward of services rendered, and on condition of the continuance of those services. He was not merely the landlord or proprietor of the soil—not merely the civil ruler, with the right of jurisdiction and other natural prerogatives of sovereignty—but he was the head of a family, of which all his tenants were in a certain sense members. Hence the rights of wardship and of marriage, and various customs

[3] "Il en fit comme sage et comme mieux advisé que non y attendre; car son noble père en avoit beaucoup lessié souler et souffert aller à perte, par estre trop bon." Chastellain, p. 445.

of the like nature. Hence also the absence of a distinction subsequently made between officers of state and officers of the household, and the performance by men of the highest birth of duties which in the palace of the Cæsars would have been considered fit only for slaves. Closely examined, that principle which lay at the basis of the patriarchal system and of the clan, by which the body politic was supposed to be only a larger family, and the authority of the ruler was derived from his inherited position as its head, will be found to have existed also among the complicated relations of feudalism.

Every noble household was a court, formed on the same pattern as that of the monarch, and differing from it only in degrees of magnitude and splendour. It was filled with a crowd of retainers, whose various functions, including those of personal attendance on the heads of the family, implied not a menial condition of domestic servitude, but a tie of fealty and honour. Every service was in the nature of an act of homage. Every ceremony was symbolical, indicating the nature and the limits of that political tie which bound together the different classes of society. The bending of the knee was no abasement; the lord himself paid the like obeisance to his suzerain.[4] The attendant who waited obsequiously at his table, carved the viands or poured out the wine, held perhaps the highest place in his confidence, and acted in war as his standard-bearer or his lieutenant. The page who went upon the lady's errands was himself

[4] The real nature of such usages is shown in the relics which have survived the overthrow of the feudal system. An English nobleman still kneels in paying homage to his sovereign; but no such marks of honour are paid to a person, of whatever rank, by his menial attendants.

of gentle birth, and looked forward to a time when he should win his spurs in her quarrel or wear her favours in the tilting-field. Service in the family of a man of rank afforded the proper training for noble youth, who, passing successively through various gradations of advancement, gained a thorough acquaintance with the duties and the accomplishments, as well as with the manners and the sentiments, which would hereafter be demanded of them in a higher sphere of action, and which a succeeding generation would acquire from their example.

The Burgundian establishment was, as we have already remarked, the most costly and magnificent in Europe. Subsequently, under the line of Austria, the rulers of Spain and of the Netherlands, it was raised perhaps to a still higher degree of external splendour; but it seems, at the same time, to have lost some of its essential characteristics. In the sixteenth century royalty no longer rested on the same foundations as feudal sovereignty; and a feudal household no longer symbolised the relations between the crown and its vassals. It did not bring the monarch into constant and habitual intercourse with his nobles, or place him on a conspicuous stage where his subjects of every rank might behold him and have access to his person. Charles the Fifth and Philip the Second lived isolated lives in the midst of their courts. They submitted to the more irksome restraints of an elaborate ceremonial only on special occasions. Their public audiences were merely formal, and as rare and brief as possible. They spent most of their time in the seclusion of their closets. They were seldom or never present at the sittings of the different councils, nor were these bodies

intrusted with the full knowledge and direction of the matters that nominally belonged to them. Even the Privy Council, instituted by these princes as a depositary of their secrets and a final court of appeal, was soon found to be unsuited to so delicate an office. Everything of importance was reserved for a *consulta* or secret committee—sometimes for a single minister, who alone possessed a key to all the mysteries of the government. The ostensible machinery of the state was in a great degree useless as well as cumbersome; the wheels on which it really moved were hidden from view.

This was not the system maintained by Charles of Burgundy. Little influenced by others, he gave no exclusive confidence, no extraordinary powers, to particular individuals. The current of his affairs flowed regularly through channels that were open and direct. He presided in person at the council-board, where the business in hand was freely discussed and definitively settled. His daily life was one of pomp and publicity. Every morning, after the ceremonies of the *grande levée*, he attended mass either in his chapel or in a public church, and was followed by a long procession of princes and nobles, knights, equerries, and pages. He dined always in state, surrounded by the whole court, and served by the highest functionaries, each performing his particular office with the forms prescribed by a code of etiquette that embraced a multitude of details. When the banquet was ended all took their seats, in due order of precedence, on rows of benches along the sides of the hall. There was no lack of splendid dresses and sparkling gems, or of whatever else could give brilliancy to the scene. The duke's

chair was on a dais raised three steps above the floor and carpeted with cloth of gold. His attire, as became his superior rank, was rich and magnificent above that of all the rest.[5] His bearing was stately. His glance, as it ranged over the assembly, confessed his pride in that band of noble vassals, the satellites of his glory, and confidence in his own capacity as their ruler and their chief.[6] Often he discoursed to them, "like an orator," of the duties and obligations annexed to their stations, as well as of fealty and honour, and the other virtues of the knightly character.[7] Thrice in the week the assembly became a public audience. The meanest subject might enter to present his petition, which was read aloud by a secretary kneeling on a footstool in front of the throne. Whenever he went abroad the duke was followed by a long and brilliant retinue that courted the public gaze. At night he was escorted to his chamber by a group of equerries, sixteen in number, who were in constant and immediate attendance upon

[5] "Et tousjours, comme prince et chief sur tous, fust richement et magnifiquement habitué sur tous." Chastellain, p. 448.

[6] "Les regarda le maistre volentiers, et y print grand délit. Et luy sembloit bien, puisqu'il estoit puissant et de volonté pour les tenir aises et tellement comme ly, il estoit bien raison que eulx aussi eussent volenté de mesmes, pour lui faire honneur et service qui lui peust plaire. Car à dire vray, et aussi ses faits le monstrèrent, il aimoit fort gloire." Chastellain, p. 447.

[7] It seems to have been customary for the head of a household to deliver solemn harangues to his sons and the other members of his family, which were listened to with the utmost deference and submission. Instances may be found in the Chronique du Bon Chevalier and other works of the same kind. In the sixteenth century the practice of sending their sons to be educated in a friend's family was especially in use among the English nobility—the extent to which it was carried, the express surrender for a stated number of years of the paternal authority, and the rigour exercised by the guardian, being noticed as peculiarities of the country in some of the Venetian Relazioni. In Cavendish's Life of Wolsey the young earl of Northumberland is represented as receiving with exemplary meekness a severe rating from his master the cardinal.

his person. They were selected from the noblest families, and their office was regarded as peculiarly honourable.[8] They were the "companions" of the prince, waiting upon him at all hours, sharing his privacy, amusing his leisure after the business of the day with their conversation, with relations of warlike exploits and the more difficult achievements of love, with music or chess, or the reading aloud of some grave passage of history or not less stately romance. When they withdrew, it was to the adjoining antechamber, where they passed the night—it being a part of their duty to guard their sovereign's rest.[9]

Such, when he was not engaged in military operations, was Charles's ordinary way of life. There were exceptions to this routine—days when the Duke was present neither at the council nor the banquet; when he shut himself from the world, and yielded to the resistless influx of a melancholy which we have already noticed as belonging to his temperament—sometimes a dejection that had its origin in calamity or disappointment, often perhaps the mere reaction of a strain upon the faculties too constant and intense.[10] Everything in

[8] Lamarche, tom. ii. pp. 482, 492.

[9] A full account of Charles's court, including a minute description of the ceremonies of the table, &c., by Olivier de Lamarche, who held the post of *maître d'hôtel* under successive princes of the Burgundian and Austrian lines, is printed at the end of his Mémoires in Petitot's edition. See also Chastellain (especially important for the spirit and meaning of this pompous etiquette), chapters 141, 142, and his "Éloge de Charles le Hardy."

[10] Chastellain mentions an instance at this period (May, 1468), and can only attribute it to the recent death of the duke's kinsman, Jacques de Bourbon; but the effects he describes seem strangely disproportioned to the cause: "Le duc s'y estoit tellement altéré et devenu perplex, qu'à peine osoit-il asseurer de sa vie; et n'y avoit nul, ne médecin ne aultre, qui le peust oncques remettre en joie ne en paix de cuer, tant se donnoit peur et mélancolie; toutes-fois n'avoit ne se sentoit nullement mal, sinon ce qu'il s'en donnoit par pensée." p. 453.

the management of his affairs showed the concentrated purpose with which he had devoted himself to the development of his resources and the extension of his power. Insensible to bodily fatigue, he laboured "outrageously" himself, and tasked his servants to the utmost of their strength.[11] The business of the audience or of the council-chamber was often protracted till a late hour of the night. Whoever exhibited any signs of weariness incurred a sharp rebuke; whoever was absent from his station found himself mulcted in a corresponding portion of his salary. In matters of finance the duke was especially rigorous and methodical. He sat among the members of the body by which these affairs were regulated, making the same calculations as the others, scrutinising every item, permitting no estimate to pass, no account to be closed, until it had received the impression of his seal.[12] He "visited" the treasury of his father, caused an inventory to be made of its contents, and took care that they should suffer no diminution. These accumulations, as well as the fines he had extorted from rebellious Liége, he reserved for extraordinary occasions—for projects of which the conception was yet vague or unformed, for emergencies certain to arise though the nature of them was yet unforeseen. The charges of his household were to be defrayed by the revenues of his domain, and his other ordinary expenses by the grants of his Flemish subjects. Already he had made demands upon

[11] "Entendoit fort à son affaire; estoit actif, laborieux par trop, et plus qu'il ne séoit à tel prince: soir et matin toudis en conseil: toudis en soin d'aucun grand cas, ou en finances, ou en faict de guerre, ou en provision du bien public. Perdoit peu d'heures, et travailloit fort gens: mesme soy se travailloit par oultrage." Chastellain, p. 509.

[12] Lamarche, tom. ii. p. 487.—Chastellain, pp. 449, 509.

the Estates more onerous than the boldest of his predecessors had ever ventured to propose; and the murmurs of the deputies were overborne by his inflexible will and the impression which had been produced by his late victories over a mutinous people.[13]

In his administration of the affairs of justice he showed the same diligence, the same zeal for reform, the same inflexibility of purpose. The states over which he ruled were neither cemented together by any of the elements of national unity, nor even connected by a federative bond. They acknowledged, under different titles, the sway of a common sovereign. In all other respects they were independent of each other, having no common system of legislation, no court exercising jurisdiction over the whole, no magistrate or other civil officer whose act or warrant was valid beyond the limits of a single province. There was not even any treaty providing for the capture and surrender of escaped criminals. Flight was therefore the obvious and almost certain means of evading punishment; the authorities contented themselves with pronouncing sentence of outlawry and banishment; and exiles were to be found in every part of the duke's dominions, who, on the easy terms of a change of residence, and that from no distant quarter, had purchased immunity for a long career of crime.[14] This state of things Charles refused to tolerate. While he looked forward to more radical changes in the future, he applied at present a simple and efficacious remedy, which, though it violated the provincial charters,

[13] See Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. i. p. 189, et seq., and Chastellain, p. 450.
[14] Lamarche, tom. ii. p. 484.

seems to have encountered no opposition. He gave to his provost-marshals—officers accustomed to the severe and summary procedures of martial law—commissions authorizing them to pursue and apprehend fugitives from justice wherever they had taken refuge. Along the French frontier—the common haunt of thieves, gipsies, disbanded troopers, and vagrants of every description—the ordinary forms of law were superseded by a more arbitrary code; and the zealous functionaries intrusted with its execution administered cord and sack at their mere discretion.[15] This was the same system which had worked so admirably in France, and which had made the name of Tristan l'Hermite a word of terror, not only on every highway, but in the most secluded nooks. What made a still stronger impression on the duke's subjects was his impartial severity towards offenders of the highest rank. A nobleman of Hainault —an illegitimate member of the house of Condé—who, in revenge for some slight indignity, had slain a man of inferior birth, and who, had Charles himself not interposed, would have been suffered to remain at large, was arrested, brought to Bruges, and sentenced to death. Neither his own distinguished services in the field, the supplications of his powerful friends, the remonstrances of his order, nor the universal sentiment in his favour, availed to extort pardon or reprieve; they served only to set in a stronger light the purpose and the character of his judge. Young and of comely aspect, with beautiful blond locks hanging adown his shoulders, and dressed in his bravest suit, "as if going to a bridal," the culprit, as he passed in a cart to the

[15] Chastellain, pp. 448, 469.—Lamarche, ubi supra.

place of execution, through streets where his proud glance and prancing steed had often won for him the admiration of the crowd, was regarded by the citizens with looks of wonder and commiseration, and followed by a troop of maidens pleading clamorously for the observance of an old custom which permitted a marriage-knot tied at the gallows to rescue a doomed neck from the halter.[16]

There was much in Charles's character, and in the line of conduct he had adopted, that could not fail to breed feelings of discontent among his vassals. Reproaches, in some respects not unlike those which had assailed the French monarch at the commencement of his reign, were now directed, though in a lower tone, against the sovereign of the Netherlands. It was thought unworthy of a great prince to impose on himself and on his ministers a drudgery so onerous and incessant; to give so large a portion of his time, and so close an attention, to the minute details of his affairs;

[16] Chastellain, pp. 459–463. — Another story exemplifying Charles's sternness and impartial justice, as well as his peculiar regard for female honour, is related by Meyer, Pontus Heuterus, and other writers, and forms the subject of one of Steele's "Spectators." Ryncault, governor of Flushing, being enamoured of a married woman of that place, and meeting with no encouragement in his unlawful suit, trumped up a charge of sedition against the husband, and had him condemned to death. The wife consented to purchase his life by the sacrifice of her virtue: but in the mean time the sentence had been secretly carried into effect. Thus doubly betrayed, the wretched widow availed herself of the duke's arrival in Zealand to fling herself at his feet and acquaint him with her wrongs. The appeal was even more effectual than she had expected or desired. As the only possible reparation, Charles compelled her seducer to marry her, and to settle his property upon her by will. But the outraged majesty of the law still remained to be vindicated; and Ryncault, having been carried from the altar to the scaffold, was immediately beheaded. This romantic tale rests, however, on no contemporary authority. Lord Macaulay, who alludes to it, rejects, on the same grounds, the similar story told of General Kirke.

to practise so stringent an economy, and to hoard the revenues which flowed into his exchequer, instead of distributing guerdons among his faithful lieges, and lightening their toils by frequent shows and festive entertainments; to forget so often, in the sallies of passion, the courtesy due to men of noble birth; to deal so rigorously with the faults, and to pay so small a regard to the customary immunities, of that class of his subjects on whose fidelity and loyal attachment to his person he must place his chief reliance.[17] A more general sentiment of alarm was awakened by the force and tenacity of his ambitious instincts, evidenced in his arbitrary mode of government and in his apparent fondness for war, foreboding peril and exhaustion to a people long accustomed to tranquillity and ease. Some of these complaints found utterance in a chapter of the Golden Fleece, held at Bruges in May, 1468, the first which had been assembled since Philip's death, or, indeed, for several years. In accordance with the rules of their order, the knights, passing in review the conduct and known habits of every member, censured whatever seemed a deviation from the manners and sentiments of chivalry. Charles, when it came to his turn to be thus lectured, listened, as became his position, with exemplary deference to the representations that were made to him.[18] But how vain to expect that such

[17] Chastellain is too deeply imbued with the sentiments common to his class to treat their complaints on this topic lightly, while his loyal affection and reverence for the house of Burgundy lead him to offer many apologies for Charles. In answer to the charge of parsimony, so often alleged against the duke, his advocate asserts that by nature he was most liberal, delighting in benefactions, and "giving with both hands" until constrained by the difficulties that beset him to put a curb upon his generosity.

[18] Reiffenberg, Hist. de la Toison d'Or, p. 54.

remonstrances would leave any lasting impression on a mind so ardent and persistent—all whose impulses were directed by a single master passion, and that passion continually stimulated by the circumstances of the times, by the temptations and by the necessities of his situation! The great feudatories of the French crown, however strenuously they might oppose the innovations of the king, were naturally led, by the same desire for power as animated him, to attempt similar innovations in the government of their own states. The greater their success in emancipating themselves from his authority, the greater their efforts to strengthen their own authority and to abridge the rights of their immediate vassals. If this was true of all these princes, it was especially applicable to the sovereign of the Netherlands. The Dukes of Brittany and Bourbon could never aspire to a condition of complete and acknowledged independence. Their dominions lay wholly within the limits of the monarchy. Their resources were contracted. Their strength consisted in their union; and each, if standing alone, was powerless against the common enemy. The house of Burgundy, on the contrary, was subject only in part to the French crown. Its possessions embraced a wide extent of territory. The consolidation of the Netherlands into a single state was a consummation to which their contiguity, their past history, and the ambition of their rulers seemed alike to point. Such a state must become not merely independent of France, but a rival power. To this result all circumstances and events were tending; those which looked in an opposite direction drifted with the current. The free constitutions of the provinces, the long tranquillity they had enjoyed, and their

ever increasing prosperity had provided the materials for a great effort, and laid the foundations on which a great and solid power might well be raised. Philip the Good had never schemed for such an end; but all his conquests and intrigues must contribute to its accomplishment. Charles himself had formed, perhaps, as yet no definite projects of the kind; but the course to which he was impelled by the mere instincts of his nature, ever craving employment and rising against obstacles, would lead him, if successful, to that and no other goal. Charles differed from his father not so much in opinions and ideas as in the greater force and activity of his intellect. "*Autre n'array*"—"I will have no other"—had been the motto assumed by Philip in his thirty-fifth year—the sentiment of a satisfied ambition, of a mind content to repose upon its early achievements. Charles at the same age adopted as his device the words "*Je l'ay emprins*"—"I have undertaken it." What had he undertaken? More than he yet knew, more than his imagination had embodied in a tangible form, more than his continual labours, his energies, his life, would suffice to realize.[19]

The darkest features of Charles's character were the pertinacity and sombre depth of his vindictive feelings. He had revived, at the chapter of the Golden Fleece already mentioned, the infamous prosecution of the Count of Nevers for having practised against his life by diabolical arts. Nevers, too prudent to confront his powerful accuser, contented himself, when summoned to appear, with sending back the insignia of the order.

[19] "Il taschoit à tant de choses grandes, qu'il n'avoit point le temps à vivre pour les mettre à fin; et estoient choses presque impossibles." Commines, tom. i. p. 229.

This did not prevent sentence of degradation being passed on him; and, in the full assembly of the knights, his arms were erased and an escutcheon painted black was placed by the king-at-arms above his vacant chair.[20] Nor was there any greater show of magnanimity in the treatment which, on this same occasion, his old enemies, the Croys, experienced at the duke's hands. Immediately after Philip's death, the brothers had addressed a letter, couched in the most submissive terms, to his successor, praying that they might be reinstated in his grace, and professing their desire to render him faithful and loyal service.[21] They now boldly presented themselves in person before the chapter of the Golden Fleece, and demanded a trial by their peers on the accusations which, several years before, had been brought against them by Charles. They were informed, in reply, that these accusations amounted to a charge of treason, and that, by the statutes of the order the knights being precluded from taking cognizance of such an offence, it rested with the sovereign alone to determine the manner of their trial.[22] They were permitted, however, to choose between submitting their cause to a tribunal of his appointment and withdrawing from his dominions. Their election was

[20] Reiffenberg, Hist. de la Toison d'Or.—Chastellain, p. 451.—Chastellain represents Nevers as losing caste in consequence of this disgrace, as shunned by men of rank and honour, abandoned by his former friends, and tortured by the anguish of his own reflections. ("Certes, bien devoit avoir le cuer estraint d'angoisse et de dur anuy en cestui temps, qui aux plus sages et aux plus vertueux, estoit estrange et sauvaige." p. 464.) We may suspect that the noble chronicler attributed to others a keener sense of such indignities than belonged to any breast besides his own.

[21] Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. i. p. 152.

[22] This was the chief precedent cited by Alva, in 1568, in rejecting the demand of the Counts Egmont and Hoorn to be tried by the Toison d'Or.

speedily made. Daunted by the threatening aspect of the affair, they hastily quitted Bruges and returned into exile. Five years later Antony de Croy, then nearly ninety years of age, again appeared before the duke, and, prostrating himself at his feet, addressed to him, in humble and broken tones, a supplication for pardon. The nobles of the court unanimously joined in the request. Charles, seldom gracious even in acts of mercy, after some hesitation, yielded a cold forgiveness. The family was soon after reinstated in its possessions. In time it was restored to many of its former honours; and one of its branches was invested with higher rank than belonged to any other noble house in the Netherlands. Its members, indeed, seemed to have a peculiar faculty for establishing the most intimate personal relations with their sovereigns. During the first quarter of the sixteenth century they occupied their old position at the Belgian court; and the celebrated William de Croy, Lord of Chièvres, maintained the same ascendancy over the minority of Charles the Fifth as Antony had maintained over the dotage of Philip the Good.[23]

Before his departure from Bruges, on a tour through the northern provinces, the first year of Charles's reign had ended,—the prescribed period of mourning for his predecessor,—and the time had arrived for the solemnization of his marriage with the Princess Margaret of York. Regarding this alliance, in its political aspect, as a triumph over the machinations of the French king, he proposed to celebrate the event with more than wonted splendour. For several months the town had

[23] Gachard, Notice des Archives de M. le duc de Caraman, p. 115, et seq. —Reiffenberg, Hist. de la Toison d'Or, pp. 45, 46, et al.

been a scene of active preparations for the nuptial *fête*. The looms had been driven at their highest speed; the shops had displayed their choicest fabrics; crowds of workpeople of every description had been employed about the palace; and painters and other artists skilful in decoration had been assembled from all parts of the country.[24]

Margaret took leave of her brother's court about the middle of June, and "rode thurgh oute London behynde the Erle of Warwicke,"[25] who still kept up a show of friendly relations with Edward—twirling between his fingers the white rose which he had taken from his bosom, ere he threw it in the dust and trampled on it. She was accompanied in her embarkation by the Lord Scales and a gallant troop of knights and gentlemen, and by more than fourscore ladies of rank, including the Duchess of Norfolk and other fair representatives of the great nobility. A fleet of sixteen vessels, commanded by the lord admiral of England, conveyed the princess and her attendants to the Flemish port of Sluys, where she was received and conducted to her lodgings by a number of the most distinguished nobles, appointed to serve as her escort. She was immediately waited upon by the Duchess Isabella and the youthful heiress of the Burgundian states, and, on the evening of the following day, received a private visit

[24] Compte des ouvrages et aussi des entremetz et paintures faicts à Bruges, aux nopces de MS le Duc Charles, Laborde, Ducs de Bourgogne, Preuves, tom. ii. p. 293–381. See also Michiels, Hist. de la Peinture flamande et hollandaise, tom. ii., and Annales de la Soc. d'Émulation de la Flandre, tom. iii.

[25] Hearne, Fragment, p. 296.—She rode on the same horse with him, according to the fashion of that time. See the contemporary English account of the nuptials printed in the Excerpta Historica (London, 1831).

from the duke, when vows of betrothal were formally exchanged. At Bruges, meanwhile, the citizens celebrated her coming by huge pyramidal bonfires, forty feet high, which throughout the night lighted up the quaint, but beautiful and varied, architecture of their streets.

After a week spent by Margaret and her company at Sluys, they were conducted in barges, by the slow navigation of the canal, to Damme, a small town in the immediate vicinity of Bruges. Early on the next morning (Sunday, July 3,) Charles, accompanied by only five or six of his principal nobles, arrived at her lodgings; and the marriage ceremony was performed by the Bishop of Salisbury, assisted by a papal legate. The duke returned immediately, and with the same privacy, to his palace. The pageantry and ceremony of the day were reserved for his bride. A procession awaited her at the gate of Sainte-Croix, composed of what was fittest to represent the splendour of such a court and the wealth of such a town—the prelates and other ecclesiastics, in surplice and stole, carrying crucifixes and costly reliquaries; the municipal authorities, in their gowns and chains of office; the members of the ducal household, the meaner sort in liveries of black and violet, the higher functionaries in long mantles of black velvet and purpoints of crimson satin; bands of clarions and trumpets; troops of archers in showy uniforms; heralds, pursuivants, and kings-at-arms in coats of blazonry; the nobles in every variety of rich costume, the trappings of their horses glittering with gold and gems, and fringed with silver bells; and the "nations," or foreign trading companies, among whom the Venetians, the Florentines, and the Easterlings

were conspicuous by their number and the splendour of their retinues and equipments.

The bridal litter, covered with cloth of gold, and drawn by horses caparisoned with the same material, took its place in the centre of this *cortége*. The princess, attired in cloth of silver, wore on her head a crown girt with diamonds, above which she had placed with her own hands a simple chaplet of roses, presented to her by nuns at her entrance into the town. Her countenance was pleasing; her deportment gracious and serene. A small troop of archers, in the uniform of the English body-guard, marched in front of her litter; the knights of the Toison, in their majestic robes, walked on either side. Behind came the ladies of her suite—the younger and unmarried ones on snow-white palfreys, the others in gaudy chariots emblazoned with the arms of England and of Burgundy. The streets were hung with silken tapestries and cloth of gold, and crossed by triumphal arches, from which, as the princess passed beneath, white doves were let loose, that circled round her head and settled on the poles of her litter. At different points along the road she was entertained with "Histories" —a kind of dramatic representation, in which the poet, generally with good reason, was forced to follow the inspirations of the machinest; and the walls in front of the palace were covered with heraldic paintings and devices, emblematical of the power and grandeur of the two sovereigns now united by so close a tie.[26]

An interval of several hours was granted for refresh-

[26] Lamarche, tom. ii. pp. 299-311.—Haynin, tom. i. p. 106, et seq.—The Mariage of the Ryght high' and myghty Prince the Duc of Burgoigne

ment and repose. Meanwhile the citizens, who had gazed on these familiar splendours with unsated eyes, now began to throng the avenues leading to the great square, where a passage of arms had been proclaimed, which the Great Bastard of Burgundy was to maintain against all comers. The windows and roofs of the surrounding houses, as well as the stagings erected at different points for their better accommodation, were soon occupied by the crowd. The balconies in front of the Hôtel de Ville were reserved for the ladies of the court. A platform on the opposite side of the square was the station appointed for the judges, the marshals and pursuivants, and other officers of the lists; and beside it stood a lofty pine-tree, with gilded trunk, indicating that the noble challenger had given to his emprise the title of the "Tree of Gold." At one end of the arena an arched gateway, flanked with towers gorgeously painted and adorned, and defended by a movable barrier, presented means of access to the contending knights. All the other approaches were strictly closed. Tapestries and silken banners waved from every wall; and a scene of profuse brilliancy awaited the gaze of the princess, whose coming was announced by a strain of martial music, soon drowned amid the swelling shouts of the vast concourse of spectators.

A flourish of trumpets was now heard from the gate; and a herald on the outside, approaching the barrier, gave notice that a high and puissant lord, desirous of accomplishing the adventure of the Golden Tree, de-

with the Right high and excellent Princesse Margarett, Excerpta Historica, pp. 227-248.—Meyer, fol. 344.—Barlandus, De Carolo Burgundo.—Gollut, col. 1225.

manded entrance. The blazon of arms which he presented was that of Adolphus of Cleves, lord of Ravenstein. The barrier was thrown open; and a band of drums and clarions led the way, followed by heralds and pursuivants, and by a sumptuous litter drawn by a pair of black horses of great size and beauty, with housings of blue velvet and embroidered gold. The musicians, pages, and other attendants wore dresses of the same colour and material; and the knight himself, who reclined upon the cushions of the litter, feigning debility and age, was attired in a suit of tawny velvet, trimmed with ermine, with slashes in the sleeves affording glimpses of the armour which he wore beneath. His *destrier*, caparisoned in cloth of gold fringed with silver bells, was led behind the litter, and was followed by two other horses carrying the harness in which he was presently to be equipped. Having paid his obeisance to the judges of the contest and the ladies in the balcony, to whom he excused himself, on account of his infirmities, for attempting this his last exploit in arms, the knight retired by a side door to prepare himself for the combat.

A loud burst of clarions now announced the approach of the challenger; and, the barrier being again opened, a pavilion of yellow silk, embroidered all over with the Tree of Gold and other armorial devices, and surmounted by a splendid banner, entered, without any visible means of motion, and, gliding over the ground, took its station at the further end of the lists. It opened in the middle; and the Great Bastard, equipped in complete armour and mounted on a powerful steed, rode slowly forth into the arena. He was hailed with

acclamations, the due meed of so renowned a knight; and, having made the circuit of the lists and exhibited his skill in horsemanship, he returned to his post and awaited his antagonist. Immediately the lord of Ravenstein made his appearance, mounted and armed, his helmet on his head, his shield suspended from his neck. The squires presented the lances; a blast from a single horn gave the signal for the encounter; and the knights, setting spurs to their horses, met at full gallop, and shivered their strong and heavy spears against each other's armour, so that the splinters flew far above their heads, and horse and rider reeled with the shock. Neither of the combatants, however, lost his saddle, and, amid thunders of applause, they backed their steeds to their former stations, and, receiving fresh lances from the attendants, ran a second course with the same result. Thus the jousts continued until the sand with which the ground had been thickly strewn was trampled and scattered, and the western sun no longer cast its glory on the polished steel, the silken banners, and all the radiant scenery of the lists. The signal horn gave notice that the tilting was ended for the day; and the Knight of the Golden Tree, who had broken more lances than his opponent, being proclaimed the victor, the spectators rapidly dispersed. The populace wended their way towards different parts of the town, where spectacles of a less refined description were provided for their entertainment, and fountains of Burgundy and Rhenish wine played into stone basins from which all might drink at pleasure; while the nobles, repairing to their quarters, hastened to change the heavy mantles and other habiliments which they had worn throughout the day for

garments of a lighter texture, more appropriate to the festivities of the banqueting-hall.[27]

The building designed for this purpose was a temporary structure erected in the tennis-court behind the palace. It was seventy feet in width, a hundred and forty in length, and more than sixty feet high. The ceiling was richly painted; the projecting cornices were decorated with banners and heraldic embellishments; and the walls were hung with the celebrated tapestry representing the adventures of Jason in quest of the Golden Fleece, and with similar productions of Flemish ingenuity and art. In the centre of the hall rose a buffet of enormous dimensions, supporting a prodigious quantity of plate, of which the largest, but least costly, articles were piled on the lower shelves, while goblets of embossed gold, studded with precious stones, and other articles of inestimable value, were displayed in a conspicuous manner on the summit. The apartment was lighted by chandeliers in the form of castles surrounded by forests and mountains, with revolving paths, on which serpents, dragons, and other monstrous animals seemed to roam in search of prey, spouting forth jets of flame that were reflected in huge mirrors so arranged as to catch and multiply the rays. The tables extended lengthwise on either side of the hall, except one reserved for the ducal family and the guests of highest rank, which crossed it, on a raised platform, at the upper end, and was overhung by a canopy with curtains descending to the floor, so as to present the appearance of an open pavilion. The dishes containing the principal meats represented gaily painted vessels, seven

[27] Lamarche.—Haynin.

feet long, completely rigged, the masts and cordage gilt, the sails and streamers of silk, each floating in a silver lake between shores of verdure and enamelled rocks, and attended by a fleet of boats laden with lemons, olives, and other condiments. There were thirty of these vessels, and as many huge pasties in a castellated shape with banners waving from their battlements and towers; besides tents and pavilions for the fruit, jelly-dishes of crystal, supported by figures of the same material dispensing streams of lavender and rosewater, and an immense profusion of gold and silver plate. The repast was enlivened by interludes, such as were described in a former chapter; and it was three hours after midnight when the company retired.[28]

The festivities were kept up for more than a week with unabated splendour and vivacity, each day presenting the same general round of entertainments, including the tournament, the banquet, and the dance, but with sufficient change of scenery and variety of incident to stimulate the spirits both of actors and spectators. We find one of the English visitors writing to his friends at home that in luxury and magnificence no court in Christendom could compare with that of Burgundy, which seemed to him a living realization of the stories he had heard and read of King Arthur and the Round Table.[29] Knights from almost every part of Europe had come to suspend their emblazoned shields from the branches of the Tree of Gold, and to exhibit their prowess and dexterity on so fair an occasion for achieving honour and a wide renown. On the ninth

[28] Compte des ouvrages, &c., in Laborde, ubi supra. — Lamarche. — Excerpta Historica.

[29] See the letter of John Paston the Younger from Bruges, July 15, 1468, in Fenn's Paston Letters.

day the duke entered the lists in person, jousting with the Sire de Ravenstein, and afterwards taking part in the general tourney, when fifty knights, ranged in two parties, contended, with alternate fortune, for victory. When their lances were broken they had recourse to their swords, the points of which, however, had been carefully blunted; yet, as the combatants were dispersed in the *melée*, so earnest and exciting did the conflict become, that no heed was given to the signal of recall, and Charles, raising his visor, rode about the field, forcing his way between the knights, striking down their weapons, and commanding them to desist. The banquet on the same evening was more sumptuous than any that had preceded it. Among the decorations of the table were gardens formed of a mosaic-work of rare and highly polished stones, inlaid with silver, and surrounded with hedges made of fine gold. In the centre of each enclosure stood a tree of gold, with branches, fruit, and foliage exquisitely wrought in imitation of those of the orange, apple, pear, or other tree. Fountains impregnated with various fragrant essences diffused perfume through the air. Before taking their seats the company moved in procession around the tables, examining the different marvels. The *entremets* exhibited were of the most grotesque character. The monstrous figure of a whale, sixty feet long, and "so high that men on horseback, riding on either side, would have been unable to see each other across the back," made its appearance on the floor of the hall, imitating with its fins and tail the motions of swimming, and opening its huge mouth, from which a troop of youths and maidens issued forth habited in the Moorish costume, and danced to the sound of the tambourine and

other instruments, until interrupted in their sports by giants armed with clubs, who drove them back into their strange retreat.[30]

Tuesday the 12th of July was the last day of the festival. It was employed, however, by the duke himself, as well as by most of the company, in preparations for departure. In the evening the hall presented a brilliant and animated appearance. The marshals and pursuivants who had performed the service of the lists went from table to table demanding *largesse*, which was liberally bestowed. Aspirants to heraldic office received the baptism of chivalry; functionaries who had served a certain term were promoted to higher grades. The duke took leave of his distinguished guests, distributing among them costly tokens of his munificence; and a sudden peal of clarions and trumpets, which echoed through the hall and shook the heavy draperies of silk and gold, gave notice that the *fête*, with its attendant ceremonies, was concluded.[31]

We must now turn our glance on the position and proceedings of the French king, who, when compelled in the previous winter to abandon his meditated assault upon the Duke of Brittany, had employed himself in scanning all the features of a situation which appeared to him to be growing every day more critical and menacing. He would not allow himself to visit his capital, or leave to his subordinates the task of observation on the outposts, but remained where he might perceive with his own eyes the first indications of a

[30] Laborde, ubi supra.—Lamarche.—Excerpta Historica.

[31] Lamarche.—Le tiers Mariaige de Monsieur le Duc Charles de Bourgoigne avec Margriete d'Iorc, Haynin, tom. i. pp. 106–132.

hostile movement—pacing backwards and forwards from Compiègne to Noyon, from Noyon to Compiègne,[32] like a sentinel on his beat, and in that alert state of mind which seldom fails to betray itself by groundless or premature alarms. His fears, however, were far from chimerical. Hostile demonstrations were still continued on the side of Burgundy. A treaty was negotiated binding the King of England to furnish a body of troops to assist in the recovery of Normandy, with a stipulation that the strong places in that province still occupied by the Bretons should be put in his possession by way of guaranty for the payment of a subsidy.[33] Warlike preparations to carry this treaty into effect were making along the southern coast, and it was given out that Edward would shortly take the field in person. His chancellor opened Parliament, in May, with a long address, dwelling chiefly on the foreign policy of the government, its amity with the French princes, and especially the close alliance it had formed with the Duke of Burgundy—declaring it to be the king's intention to reconquer the dominions of his ancestors, and calling on the Commons for a sufficient grant to enable him to raise an army for this purpose.[34] True, for every plot Louis had a counterplot prepared. Jasper Tudor, the exiled Earl of Pembroke, was to be sent over to kindle an insurrection in Wales. Margaret of Anjou, her still dauntless spirit inflamed with the prospect of vengeance and redress, was impatiently

[32] "Changea propos, et retourna hastivement de Compiegne à Noyon, où peu de temps paravant y avoit esté. . . . Se tint par certain long temps à Noyon, Compiegne, Chauny, et autres places environ." De Troyes, pp. 75, 76.

[33] Morice, Hist. de Bretagne, liv. xiii. Rymer, tom. xi. p. 615, et al.

[34] Excerpta Historica, p. 224.—Sharon Turner, vol. iii. p. 316.

awaiting at Harfleur the king's permission to embark, and, what was more important, but not so easily to be obtained, a loan from his coffers to defray the expenses of her expedition. The influence and secret disaffection of the Nevilles might be expected to neutralize in some degree the effect of Edward's appeal to the martial instincts of his nobles and the prejudices of his people. Liége, too, bruised and torpid as it now lay, was to be artfully stimulated and propped up to receive another and a final overthrow; and, if all these projects for diverting or paralyzing his enemies should fail, Louis, thoroughly equipped and prepared for war, might commit himself to the chances of the field with confident hopes of being able to make good his defence.

But this alternative, prepared for it though he was, he could not regard without anxiety and dread. He had taken infinite pains and shown infinite dexterity in amassing and uniting means and agencies wherewith to act; but he hesitated to put them to the proof. The threads woven by intrigue snap in the heavy and sultry atmosphere of an approaching storm. What was wanting was a moral cohesion—a national sentiment binding the people in support of his cause. Louis had least of all men the natural qualities that kindle such a sentiment; but he saw the necessity for its existence, and he applied himself to the task of creating it. He called together the Estates of his realm, and, having first, *pro formâ*, allowed his chancellor to open the proceedings with one of those prolix and pedantical harangues with which the worthy Juvenal was accustomed to afflict his hearers,[35] he next, in a clear and

April, 1468.

[35] Duclos, tom. iii., Preuves, pp. 233–248.

masterly oration from his own lips, exposed the embarrassments under which he laboured. He explained the reasons why Normandy should remain for ever united with the domains of the crown; but, modestly admitting his own deficiencies of judgment, he left it to the Estates to determine whether these reasons were sufficient, or what further sacrifices he should make for the purpose of contenting his brother and the other princes of his family. "The matter was one which concerned the universal weal and the *perpetuity* of the kingdom, and not the mere interests of the king, who, being mortal, had but a temporary fee in the dominions over which he ruled."[36] The assembly was not unmoved by this frank and forcible statement. It was the first occasion on which a French monarch had of his free will summoned the representatives of the different classes of his subjects, with the intent of submitting his measures for their deliberation and advice. Had the precedent been more often followed, it is probable that the history of the country in later times would have flowed in a less vehement and turbid stream. Few, of course, of the great feudatories were present; but there was a fair attendance of the lesser nobility, and sixty-four towns were represented by twice that number of deputies. It was to his auditors of this latter class that the king's appeal was specially addressed; and it was by the members of this body that the response which he expected was made. It was declared to be intolerable that France should be subjected to enormous burdens, and

[36] "Protesta devant eux tous soi estre insuffisant ly de ly, et non ydoine pour faire rien en ceste matère de propre teste, veu encore qu'elle touchoit au bien universel de tout le royaume, et sa perpétuité, et ly n'y avoit que son voyage." Chastellain, p. 455.

harassed by continual levies of troops, for the purpose of preventing the members of the royal family and other great princes, who were especially bound to protect the state, from flying into open rebellion. The whole evil had arisen from the practice in past times of separating vast territories from the direct authority of the crown, enabling the possessors to usurp independent power, and thus threatening the monarchy with disruption. An ordinance of Charles the Wise had assigned an estate yielding an income of twelve thousand livres as a suitable appanage for a prince of the blood; and if, in addition to such a grant, the king, as he had generously offered, should allow his brother a pension of sixty thousand livres, Charles would have no just grounds of complaint. "For no cause under Heaven—neither from fraternal affection, nor the obligations of a promise, nor fear or menace of war—ought the king to commit the government of Normandy into any hands but his own." The Duke of Brittany, by fomenting disturbances within the realm and contracting an alliance with its foreign enemies, had forfeited all claim to be treated with consideration; he should be summoned to evacuate the places in Normandy of which he held an usurped possession, and, if he refused to comply, should be expelled from them by force. In regard to the Duke of Burgundy the Estates did not venture to use a similar strain of language. They recommended that that prince should be solicited to assist in the re-establishment of order; and they appointed a committee from their own number to confer with him on the subject.[37]

[37] Chastellain, pp. 455-457.—Lenglet, tom. iii. p. 5, et al.

Somewhat reassured by these tokens of the sympathy and concurrence of his people, Louis returned to his post. And it was not long before the sparks thus struck kindled a flame throughout the country. The deputies communicated to their constituents the description they had received of the imperilled condition of the state, the alarm entertained by the king, and his vigilant and ceaseless labours. A flood of discussion was let loose; and public opinion, though it lacked a sufficient organ for its utterance, was yet able to make itself heard. The citizens, more free-spoken than the Estates, were clamorous in charging the Duke of Burgundy as the chief promoter of the existing troubles. "What," it was asked, "has his house ever wrought but mischief to France?" All the terrible calamities which the country had experienced in the early part of the century were ascribed to the ambition of his father and his grandfather. His own thirst for conquest was insatiable. Why was he not content with the wealthy provinces, the great towns, which had come to him by inheritance? He had Ghent and Bruges; did he look to have Paris also? He had lands and lordships innumerable; did he covet the sceptre and the crown?[38] It was time that the territory on the Somme, which he had ravished by violence from the king, should be torn from his grasp. His alliance with Edward, his marriage with an English princess, made him the declared enemy of France.

Charles confronted this storm of accusations and menaces with his wonted air of obstinate defiance. As

[38] "Veut-il avoir la coronne et le sceptre en main, et qui tant a de seigneuries et de possessions et est si puissant? . . . Et a son Gand et son Bruges, que veut-il? veut-il avoir encore Paris?" Chastellain, p. 477.

for the towns of Picardy, they were, as he had before declared, the *last* of his possessions which he would willingly surrender;[39] and he doubted not that his power was sufficient to enable him to defend himself at all points. It seemed now that, in the impending struggle, his own safety, and not merely that of his allies, was at stake; and he took his measures accordingly. He issued a fresh summons to his vassals to equip themselves for the field; and he ordered a fortified camp to be formed in the neighbourhood of Péronne, on the Somme, a position in which he could at once maintain a menacing attitude towards the King and secure his own line of defence. His preparations were on a more extensive scale than on any former occasion. All available means were put in requisition for the supply of horses, wagons, tents, artillery, and equipments. In the course of the summer nearly three thousand pieces of cannon—most of them, doubtless, of much smaller calibre, and all, from their inferior construction, of a far less effective description, than any that are now used in war—were carried forward by various routes to the place of muster. The camp, surrounded as usual by a barrier of wagons, with an outer defence consisting of palisades and entrenchments, was regularly laid out in streets and squares, lined with tents as well as with houses built of wood or clay, for the accommodation not only of the troops, but of an immense number of sutlers, purveyors, and travelling hucksters, on whom, in default of a commissariat, the armies of that day were accustomed to depend in great

[39] "Vueil bien qu'il sçaiche que je vouldroie perdre la meilleure ducié que j'aye aius que je m'en départisse; et seront toutes les derraines terres et villes que je garderai pour moi." Chastellain, p. 459.

measure for their supplies. Thus a fortified town seemed suddenly to have sprung into existence; week after week fresh levies made their appearance; and, towards the end of August, Charles, who had been employed, in different quarters, in urging forward these preparations, arrived on the ground.[40]

Meanwhile the king had continued at Noyon, on the Oise, less than thirty miles off. But, while his face was still turned in the same direction, his hands were active behind his back. He had one immense advantage over all his antagonists in the permanent force originally established by the famous ordinances of his father, and since his own accession greatly increased and more vigorously disciplined. His artillery surpassed even that of Charles. The fortifications on the frontier had been repaired, and every post was strongly guarded. The allies, too, from the distances by which they were separated and the obstacles which each had to overcome, were unable to act with promptitude or concert. Edward was hindered by many difficulties, as well as by the indolence of his temperament; and, though six thousand archers, under his brother-in-law, the Lord Scales, were ready to embark,[41] it was doubtful whether, amid the present threatenings of a Lancastrian insurrection, even this force would be permitted to leave England. Louis, therefore, intrusted the Sire de Beaujeu, Admiral of France, and Nicholas of Anjou, a grandson of King René, each with the command of a considerable body of troops, with instructions to the former to seize the towns of Lower Normandy where the royal authority had not

[40] Chastellain, pp. 466, 469-471, 475, et al.—Ancienne Chronique, Lenglet, tom. ii. p. 192.

[41] Haynin, tom. i. p. 138.—Sharon Turner, vol. iii. p. 317.

been recognized; while the latter, by a rapid but stealthy movement, was to penetrate the frontier of Brittany on the south, and lay siege to Ancenis. These movements, executed discreetly and with success, had the effect of intimidating Francis, who called on his allies, and especially on the Duke of Burgundy, for immediate aid.[42] A short truce was granted by his assailants;[43] but they employed the interval in uniting their forces, and, as soon as it had expired, operations were resumed, and Ancenis and Chantonceaux were captured. The duke saw himself apparently deserted by his allies. The Burgundians, delayed by the very magnitude of their preparations, were not yet ready to take the field. It is probable, also, that among the advisers of Francis were some who had motives of their own for counselling submission; for, surrounded by a hardy and warlike population, he might easily have protracted his defence. But timidity or treachery prevailed; and he hastened to negotiate a peace, by which he made a formal surrender of the towns in Lower Normandy, renounced the alliance of England and of the Duke of Burgundy, and pledged himself on behalf of Charles of France that the latter should submit his claims to the arbitration of the Duke of Calabria and the Constable Saint-Pol.[44]

The treaty of Ancenis (signed September 10), by relieving the king from one source of embarrassment, seemed to offer him an opportunity of adopting a bold

[42] "Je vous prie sur tout l'amour et l'alliance d'entre vous et moy, qu'a ce besoing me venez secourir; . . . car il en est temps et le plus déligement que pourrez venez, et sans plus delay." Morice, Preuves, tom. iii. p. 182.

[43] Lenglet, tom. iii. p. 8.

[44] Hist. de Bourgogne, tom. iv., Preuves, p. ccxix.—Lenglet, tom. iii. p. 9, et seq. — Commines, tom. i. pp. 148, 149.—Basin, tom. ii. p. 185, et seq.—De Troyes, p. 75.

and decided course of action in a quarter where he had suffered still greater annoyance and where his power had so often been defied. The popular sentiment was in his favour, and urged him to the stroke. The army, through all its ranks, vibrated with the same feeling. Now was the time to drive the Duke of Burgundy from the Somme, and compel that insolent and haughty prince to acknowledge the supremacy and superior strength of his rightful sovereign. Nor have later critics failed to censure Louis as exhibiting on this occasion a fatal want of courage and determination. But such reproaches only indicate that a farsighted and consistent policy had not been carefully studied or thoroughly appreciated. The greatest enemy which France had reason to dread, in the middle of the fifteenth century, was not the Duke of Burgundy or the King of England, but War—the presence of foreign troops upon her soil, a state of active and undisguised hostilities, which must loosen the framework of the monarchy, or at least expose it to violent and hazardous shocks.[45] The old ruptures were slowly healing; but the time had not arrived when all the parts could act with freedom and in unison. A numerous and still powerful nobility was kept in partial quiet and subordination by the vigilance of the king, by his daily increasing strength and the self-reliant attitude which he had of late been enabled to assume, and by the con-

[45] Such was the explanation given by Louis himself, several years afterwards, of the motives by which he had been influenced on similar occasions: "Ne vouloit riens mettre en hazard. Et ne le faisoit pas seullement par la craincte du duc de Bourgogne, mais pour doubte des desobeyssances qui pourroient advenir en son royaulme. . . . . Il m'a maintesfois dict qu'il congnoissoit bien ses subjectz, et qu'il les trouveroit bien, si ses besongnes se portoient mal." Commines, tom. i. p. 315.

stant and dexterous use of all the means at his command for dividing and neutralizing the elements of opposition. Any great and prolonged strain upon his resources must deprive him of the ability to carry on this work. Any misfortune he might sustain, any manifest weakness, would set in motion all the treacherous instincts, and revive all the plottings and cabals, that had so lately been suppressed.[46] The course which he had recently adopted was that which he must still pursue—dealing quietly and subtly with the nearest but least active dangers, maintaining openly a state of preparation and defence against invasion from abroad or rebellion at home, and waiting patiently till some propitious chance should bring within his reach prizes that might be grasped without the hazard of a greater loss. The conquest of Normandy had been a matter of necessity: deprived of the command of that province, he lay wholly at the mercy of his foes. He had now completed, in this quarter, the line of defence which he had planned. But a direct attack on the Duke of Burgundy would be only the commencement of a long and hazardous struggle.[47] Utterly to crush so powerful a prince was a project not to be conceived; and no defeat which Charles might suffer, no losses he might sustain, would wring from him a single concession, much less compel him to sue for peace. As long as a province or a town remained to him, as long as a sword was at his command or his

[46] See the remarks of Chastellain (pp. 454, 462, et al.) on the sentiments of the French nobility arising out of its divided dependence on the crown and on the great feudatories.

[47] "La guerre entre deux grans princes est bien aysee à commencer, mais tres mal aysee à appaiser, pour les choses qui y adviennent, et qui en despendent," remarks Commines, speaking of the present crisis. Tom. i. p. 152.

own arm could wield one, he would assert his rights and continue the contest;[48] and during the continuance of such a contest France must be exposed to great and unavoidable disasters and to perils incalculable.

While, therefore, all the world anticipated a sudden and bloody collision,—while the traders of either country who had crossed the frontiers in the transaction of their business hastily packed up their wares and retreated like geese before a tempest,—while Charles himself, in full expectation of an immediate attack, was straining every sinew to meet it with becoming vigour;—Louis saw in the present juncture only a favourable occasion for renewing the negotiations which had been from time to time commenced without leading to any satisfactory result. He had just concluded an amicable arrangement with his fair cousin of Brittany; why should he not conclude with his fair cousin of Burgundy a like amicable arrangement? Charles, on his part, had given out that his preparations had no hostile design against the king, but were intended merely for affording succour to his allies in accordance with the obligations which he had long since contracted. Those obligations no longer existed; the contract had been annulled by the act of Francis himself at the moment when Charles, in compliance with a summons to that effect, stood ready to execute it. He was free, therefore, to choose a new line of conduct; and, if secured against aggression, there could be no reason why he should remain in his present belligerent attitude. He would, perhaps, complain that

[48] "Jura Sainct-Jorge que apriesme y tiendroit-il lieu et place; et y venist le roy et tout l'effort de son royaulme, de là ne bougeroit jamès ne ne reculeroit d'ung pié, ains moriroit avant, se besoing le donnoit; et là vivroit et morroit, et tous les siens, jusques à avoir tiré du roy ce pourquoy il y estoit venu." Chastellain, p. 473.

the menacing demonstrations of the king had compelled him, at a great cost, to levy troops and make other needless outlays. For these Louis would reimburse him; a hundred and twenty thousand gold crowns should be paid over to him without delay—nay, half of the amount was sent forward by the agents who carried the proposals for a prolongation of the truce. It was in this prompt, open, and business-like manner that the king conducted his affairs.

Such an offer could not well be received without surprise. The indignation excited in Charles's breast by the news of the late treaty was at its height. The herald of Brittany had brought him information of it, with letters reproaching him for his tardiness, and explaining the necessity, from want of funds and sufficient troops, which had compelled Francis to yield. Charles at first believed, or affected to believe, that the letters were forged—that the herald, whose journey had been facilitated by the king, had been seduced into a betrayal of his sacred trust; and he threatened to hang the unlucky functionary for this supposed act of treason.[49] But full confirmation of the evil news was soon received, and excited the duke to a burst of furious denunciation against his faithless and cowardly ally. But alone he would maintain the contest; alone he had no cause to dread the power and enmity of a king of France.[50] No cause indeed; for here, in the midst of his wrath, was a king's messenger kneeling at his feet, with the fairest proffers from his master, and a heavy jingling bag, con-

[49] Commines, tom. i. p. 150.—De Troyes, p. 75.

[50] "Quant au regard de ce que les aultres s'estoient déportés et pacifiés aveucques le roy, et l'avoient abandonné, ... de ce ne fesoit-il estime; . . . il estoit fort et puissant assez, tout seul." Chastellain, p. 473.

taining the first instalment of a tribute which betrayed the fears and the weakness of the sender. True, there must be a certain repugnance felt in receiving what had somewhat the appearance of a salve for one's wounded feelings, or a bribe for one's connivance in an act of treachery. But this were to consider too nicely. The world would see in the transaction only a proof that the duke was feared by his enemy even more than he was detested—that the king, instead of giving the first blow, had crouched before his adversary's uplifted arm.

The initiatory steps having thus succeeded to his wish, Louis grew more restless, more impatient for that complete settlement which would place him on a securer basis and give to his policy a freer scope. That Charles was inflamed to such a pitch of wrath against his old ally concurred most happily with the king's purpose. The question which had never ceased to occupy his thoughts was, how to break up the confederacy between his great vassals;[51] and now a rift was made in the principal seam, where a wedge, skilfully inserted and driven home, would complete the separation.[52] With the king's money in his hands,—a generous and spontaneous gift,—Charles could not but listen patiently to friendly advice, to a lucid exposition of his true interests, from the same *dis*interested quarter.[53] He might now be convinced—by arguments

[51] "Tousjours estoient les fins du Roy de les separer." Commines, tom. i. p. 149.

[52] "Il sembla bien lors au Roy qu'il estoit à la fin de son intention, et que ayseement il gaigneroit ledict duc à semblablement habandonner les ducz dessus nommez."—i.e., of Brittany and Normandy. Idem, p. 150.

[53] "Esperant le gaigner de tous poinctz à sa voulenté, veu les mauvais tours que les deux dessusdictz luy avoient faictz, et veu aussi ceste grant somme d'argent qu'il luy avoit donne." Idem, ubi supra.

judiciously employed — that such allies as he had hitherto selected were unworthy of his support. He might be induced to relinquish the conspiracies of petty princes for an open and cordial union with his sovereign. Other fields of enterprise were open to him, in which the king would raise no obstacles to his success. All the present points of difference between them might be examined in a liberal spirit and definitively arranged.

But to what hands could a negotiation requiring to be so delicately managed be intrusted? For some time past Balue, now raised to the dignity of a cardinal, had been employed in carrying messages to the Burgundian court—probably, also, in cementing certain relations with some members of the ducal household; for there can be little doubt that Louis had secret well-wishers and friends among the most trusted servants of the duke. But the "good devil of a bishop,"[54] though sufficiently useful in the common and coarser business of intrigue, was far from possessing the tact and adroitness necessary for the matter now in hand. Saint-Pol had already signally failed in a similar mission, and had, besides, given deep offence to Charles by assuming, in a late visit to Bruges, a degree of state which, however suitable to the constable of France, was regarded as a mark of insolent defiance when displayed at the court of his natural sovereign.[55] In short, there was no person capable of carrying out the king's design except himself. Speeches which from an envoy might

[54] "Il est bon diable d'Evesque pour à cette heure," Louis had written of him,—in one of the letters to the Sire de Bressiure preserved by Brantôme, —adding, as if with some prophetical misgivings, "Je ne sçay ce qu'il sera à l'avenir."

[55] Chastellain, pp. 457, 458.

seem the mere commonplaces of diplomatic courtesy would fall with a potent influence from his own lips. Louis would know how to deal with the peculiarities of his rival's character, how to guide the discussion in the channel which he had himself marked out, and how to grapple with any difficulties that might unexpectedly arise. Were he to commit the affair to other hands, he would be all the while filled with anxieties and doubts —a prey by turns to agitation and depression; but no sooner did the idea of a personal interview with Charles present itself to his mind than he seems to have laboured for its realization in that hopeful, credulous, wilful spirit which in him was so strangely united with a proneness to jealousy and alarms, with a capacity for profound calculations and consummate wiles.

His mode of procedure was in the highest degree characteristic. Had he followed the course usual on such occasions, he would have proposed a meeting at some point midway between the two armies, whither each party should come with a fixed and equal number of attendants, and where a barrier would have prevented the possibility of any sudden treachery on either side. But such precautions would have betrayed the *apprehension* of treachery, and would have formed an insuperable obstacle to the establishment of a friendly and confidential intercourse. From a formal conference of this kind Louis could anticipate no good result. In fact, it was by the absence on his part of all appearance of suspicion, by an ostentatious display of confidence and trust, that he must prevent any doubt as to his own good faith, and prepare the way for a favourable reception of his proposals. In former days,

when a fugitive and an exile, he had found protection and security at the Burgundian court. Since his accession he had paid more than one visit to Philip; and it was no feeling of distrust shown or entertained by him that had prevented the repetition of these visits. The time had arrived for establishing the same relations with Philip's successor. He would seek no other security than an assurance that the duke himself would protect him against any possible mischance. At Conflans he had acted in the same manner while hostilities were actually going on; and, after their cessation, he had made his daily appearance, almost unattended, in the Burgundian camp.

An officer of the duke's chamber was employed to sound him privately on the subject. Charles, who doubtless foresaw the torrent of argument and blandishment which was to descend upon him, while conscious of his own stubborn powers of resistance, expressed a disinclination to the scheme.[56] But Louis, having once determined on its accomplishment, was too eager and too sanguine to be chilled by a slight repulse; and he despatched Balue with an open and formal proposal, which it was impossible for Charles to decline. Meanwhile the king's intention had become generally known, and excited among the mass of his adherents an opinion little favourable to his perspicacity and prudence. His ministers, being probably influenced by other considerations besides mere regard for his safety, seem to have been divided in their sentiments. Saint-Pol, alarmed at the prospect of a war in which he knew not how to side with either party, and of which, if it now broke

[56] Commines, tom. i. pp. 150, 151. Com. ii. pp. 188, 189.—Meyer, fol. 345 —Lamarche, tom. ii. p. 285.—Basin, verso.

out, Picardy would be the theatre, was seduced by these private motives for desiring an immediate and peaceful arrangement into acting the voluntary and unprompted part of a decoy—assuring Louis, from information he pretended to have received, that Charles had himself become impatient for the interview, and was otherwise in a favourable mood for the success of the negotiation. Balue, who was afterwards suspected of having maintained all along a secret correspondence with the Burgundian court, is accused in some contemporary accounts, but with little appearance of truth, not merely of having urged his master to carry out his design, but of having originally suggested it.[57] On the other hand, reports were freely circulated of disloyal and treacherous intentions on the part of Charles;[58] and the great military officers—Dammartin, Lohéac,

[57] The account given of the meeting at Péronne in the relation printed by Mdlle. Dupont (Preuves, p. 232, et seq.) is unworthy of the least credit, having evidently no better foundation than the exaggerated rumours of the time, and being altogether at variance with the statements of other writers, based upon a personal though limited knowledge of the facts. The king, it is true, brought the same charges against Balue (Lenglet, tom. iii. p. 74), but not until the cardinal's subsequent treason had given Louis a long desired opportunity of shifting from his own shoulders the responsibility of a characteristic blunder and its consequences. Collusion between Balue and Charles would imply, of course, a premeditated breach of trust on the part of the Burgundian prince—a supposition not entertained by any modern writer. Michelet (tom. vi. p. 264, and note) seems to fall into a self-contradiction on this point, for, while intimating a suspicion in regard to Balue, he expressly admits that "tout porte à croire que le duc ne méditait point un guet-apens."

[58] "Ceux qui sont autour du Roy mettent ladite allée en grande doubte, pour les dangers qui peuvent survenir en plusieurs manieres en la personne du Roy; et hier soir vint le vidame d'Amiens, qui amena un homme qui affirma sur sa vie que Bourgogne ne tend à ceste assemblée, sinon pour faire quelque échec en la personne du Roy. . . . Pleust à Dieu que ce fût le bien du Roy, et qu'il ne passât point outre." Lettre de La Loer, receveur général du Languedoc, ap. Petitot, Mém. de Commines, tom. i. p. 465, note.

Rouault—were unanimous in their efforts to dissuade the king from putting himself so completely in the power of an enemy. These remonstrances, however, produced no effect. Louis, perhaps, attributed them to the common sentiment of the army, shared by all its chiefs, in favour of active hostilities. Nor was he likely to give greater heed to rumour, founded, of course, on no knowledge of the facts, and always certain, in such a case, to prognosticate a tragical conclusion. He rejected also the advice of Dammartin, that he should take with him a body of troops sufficient for his protection. This would have defeated his plan at the very outset, by creating an impression exactly opposite to that which he was most desirous to produce. He chose to be accompanied only by his great officers of state and a single company of archers, and requested that the duke would himself furnish an escort to meet him by the way and conduct him to Péronne. Such were the striking proofs which he gave of an unlimited confidence—in what? In the loyalty and chivalric honour of his cousin of Burgundy, or in the sacred immunities of his own person and royal office? It were difficult to say. No doubt his mind was chiefly occupied with the questions about to be discussed and the mode in which he could best conduct them to a satisfactory solution.

He waited now only for the safe-conduct which he had demanded from the duke. This letter, still extant in the handwriting of Charles himself, bears the date of October 8, and is thus worded: "Monseigneur, I commend myself most humbly to your good grace. Sir, if it be your pleasure to come to this town of Péronne in order that we may converse together, I

swear and promise you, by my faith and on my honour, that you may come, remain and sojourn, and return in surety to Chauny or Noyon, according to your pleasure, and as often as it shall please you, freely and openly, without any hinderance offered either to you or any of your people, by me or by any other, for any cause that now exists *or that may hereafter arise*." [59] The language was too full and explicit to admit of cavil or distrust. Guillaume Biche, whom we have before found employed in private negotiations between the two princes, was present when the letter was written, and, having received it from the duke, caused it to be immediately transmitted to Louis.[60] In anticipation of its arrival, the king had removed to Ham, whence he set out on the morning of the following day (Sunday, October 9), accompanied by his confessor the Bishop of Avranche, by the Duke of Bourbon and his brothers the Archbishop of Lyons and the Sire de Beaujeu Admiral of France, by the cardinal, the constable, and a small troop of nobles and cavaliers, and by fourscore archers of the Scottish guard. He was met on the way by two hundred lances, under the command of Philippe de Crèvecœur, seigneur d'Esquerdes, a nobleman of distinguished gallantry, with whom Louis had long been personally acquainted. Charles himself, attended by a numerous company of nobles, awaited the arrival of the royal party by the banks of a small stream at the distance of a mile or two from Péronne. The constable

[59] The letter is printed among the *pièces justificatives* in Salazar, Lenglet, and other collections. The handwriting was subsequently sworn to by several of the Burgundian nobles. (Lenglet, tom. iii. pp. 18–20, and tom. iv. p. 405, et seq.) Gachard says, "J'ai moi-même vu l'original." It is preserved among the MSS. de Baluze, in the Imperial Library at Paris.

[60] Déposition de Guillaume Biche, Lenglet, tom. iv. p. 409.

was the first to make his appearance; and, learning from him that the king was near at hand, Charles, accompanied by his suite, went forward to receive him. As soon as his sovereign came in sight he bowed to his saddle-bow, and prepared to dismount. But Louis hastened forward, with head uncovered, and prevented him. Clasping his arms about the duke's neck, he saluted him several times, and seemed loth to terminate the embrace. Turning to the Burgundian nobles, he greeted them individually with his accustomed air of frankness and cordiality. Then he insisted on again embracing Charles, and held him in his arms "half as long again as before." Nothing could exceed the lovingness of his demeanour towards his fair cousin—to whose protection, to whose pledged and sworn faith and honour, he had now confided his person.[61]

The two princes rode side by side in the centre of the cavalcade—Louis resting his hand on Charles's shoulder, his sharp, eager visage covered with smiles,[62] his tongue going all the while with its usual velocity. It was somewhat past noon when they entered the streets of Péronne. The castle being out of repair and meagrely furnished, a neighbouring house, which belonged to one of the principal functionaries of the province, had been prepared for the king's accommodation. Here he dismissed the greater number of his suite, some of whom were provided with lodgings in another part of the town; while the constable returned to Ham, which was one of his seignorial possessions. The Scottish archers

[61] Lettre écrite aux magistrats d'Ypres, Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. i. p. 196, et seq.—Lenglet, tom. iii. pp. 17, 21, et al.—Haynin, tom. i. p. 139.—Theodoricus Paulus, De Ram, p. 215.

[62] "Tout en riant." Gachard, tom. i. p. 197.—"Le Roy tenant sa main sur l'espaule du Duc." — Lenglet, tom. iii. p. 17; and Wavrin de Forestel, tom. ii. p. 281.

were quartered in the suburbs. The duke having also taken leave, Louis entered the house, accompanied by his confessor, Cardinal Balue, the Vicomte de Narbonne, and a few attendants of inferior rank, some of them persons who, in spite of the meanness of their birth,—or perhaps on that very account,—were treated by their master with a singular familiarity. The windows of his apartment looked down upon the street; and his attention was presently called to a party of cavaliers who were preparing to take up their quarters in the castle. It happened that the lances of Burgundy, whose arrival had been long expected, had that morning reached the camp. Their commander, Thibault de Neufchâtel, marshal of Burgundy, after disposing of his troops, had entered the town almost at the same moment as Louis, but from the opposite direction. Besides his principal officers, he was accompanied by several noblemen, who, though not subjects of the duke, had, from strong personal motives, come to enlist themselves in his service in the war which they had supposed to be impending. Among them were the Count of Bresse and his brothers the Bishop of Geneva and the Count of Romont—princes of Savoy, and the heads of a party in that state which, opposing a steady resistance to the influence of France and of the Duchess Yolande, the king's sister, had naturally sought support in an alliance with the house of Burgundy. Romont was the personal friend of the duke and the companion of his boyhood. Philip of Bresse, it will be remembered, had, several years before, tested the sincerity of the king's professions and his fidelity to his engagements by accepting his proffered mediation and visiting his court *on the guaranty of a safe-conduct*—an act of temerity

expiated by a long and rigorous confinement in the citadel of Loches. Other faces in the group were those of Frenchmen—subjects and former servants of the king, but servants who had fallen under his displeasure, subjects who had discarded their allegiance, fugitives from his anger and declared enemies to his person. One of them, Poncet de la Rivière, had held a command in the royal army at the battle of Montlhéry, and, being removed from his post, had quitted the country in disgust, and gone on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, from which he was but lately returned. Another, Antoine de Chasteau-Neuf, seigneur du Lau, seneschal of Guienne, grand chamberlain and grand butler of France, had also fallen into disgrace during the War of the Public Weal, when he was suspected of maintaining a correspondence with the confederates and of plotting secretly against the king. After the conclusion of that war, Louis seemed to have forgotten the treason of those who were openly engaged in it. He spared no efforts to attach to his cause and person his most active and conspicuous opponents. The Dukes of Bourbon and Calabria, Dammartin, Lohéac, and many others, then his avowed enemies, were now his firm adherents and the executors of his plans. But against the men in whom, at that season of his greatest peril, he had been compelled to confide, and who, as he well believed, had played him false, he had conceived a deep and deadly hate, which was not the less deadly that it waited patiently for the time when the luxury of vengeance might safely be indulged. In the summer of the present year, when Louis found himself strengthened by the general support of his people, and when he seemed to be on the eve of another struggle which would test the fidelity of

his adherents, he gave the first indication of a feeling long but secretly cherished by causing Charles de Melun, the former grand-master of his household, to be tried, condemned, and executed. For Du Lau, who was already a prisoner in the fortress of Usson, a more terrible punishment had been devised. The king had given orders for the construction of an iron cage, in which his wretched victim, confined within the straitest limits and deprived of every ray of light, was to linger out the remnant of his days. But this fearful doom Du Lau contrived to evade. With the connivance of his keepers he made his escape, and succeeded in reaching Dijon, leaving the governor of the prison and other persons who had aided him in his flight to the mercy of Louis and the expert hands of Tristan l'Hermite.[63]

Such were the persons now congregated in the court-yard of the castle of Péronne, beneath the window where stood the king.[64] Every face was a familiar one; every breast was decorated with the cross of Saint Andrew;[65] every heart was filled with a rancorous hate and desire for vengeance, to learn the nature and the cause of which he needed only to consult his own. Even the Marshal of Burgundy had private as well as political grounds for regarding him with detestation—a feeling which he had never given himself any trouble to conceal. Louis was seized with a sudden and great fear.[66] He experienced that revulsion of feeling which follows surely, speedily, but too late, the commission of

[63] De Troyes, pp. 52, 74, 75.—Commines, tom. i. pp. 153, 154.—Lenglet, tom. iii. p. 21.—Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. i. pp. 197, 198.

[64] "Le Roy present aux fenestres de sondit logis." Lenglet, tom. iii. p. 21.

[65] Commines, tom. i. p. 154.

[66] "Si entra en grant paour." Idem, p. 155.

an act of rashness, when facts can be no longer doubted, when arguments can be no longer refuted, when escape is no longer possible, when the consequences are plain and inevitable. He comprehended the position in which he had placed himself—alone and powerless, and surrounded by enemies. He dared not spend a single night in his present abode, in a vicinity so full of danger. He must place himself more immediately under the protection of the duke, the only protection to which he could now appeal; and he accordingly despatched a messenger to Charles, desiring that the castle might be got in readiness for his reception, and that other measures might be taken for his better security. His request was instantly complied with. The marshal and his company were provided with different quarters; and, on the same afternoon, Louis, with his scanty suite, passed through the massive portals between a double file of the Burgundian guard.[67] It was in the guise, and it must have been with the feelings, of a captive that he entered the gloomy edifice. There was little in the aspect of its interior to reassure his sinking courage. It had been designed originally for a fortress and a state prison rather than a seignorial residence. Its thick walls had withstood many assaults,[68] and in its dark and narrow dungeons many victims of feudal anarchy and feudal tyranny had languished and expired. Close by the apartment assigned to the king

[67] Ludwigs von Diesbach Chronik und Selbstbiographie, Der Schweizerische Geschichtsforscher, B. viii. s. 173.—The author—a member of one of the most distinguished families in Berne, whose intimate relations with the French court will be found important at a later period—had recently become a page in the royal household, and accompanied the king to Péronne.

[68] Péronne — called hence "La Pucelle"—maintained its fame as a virgin fortress until taken by Wellington in 1815.

stood a tower,[69] in which, five centuries before, a predecessor of his own had been long held in durance by a rebellious vassal, the Count of Vermandois, and where his imprisonment was believed to have terminated in a violent death. The coincidence was an alarming one. But a fate less terrible, though far more humiliating, than that of Charles the Simple, was now reserved for Louis the *Astute*.

[69] A portion of this tower is still standing; and one of its apartments is shown to strangers as that in which Louis was confined. But Commines (tom. i. p. 161) says expressly, "Se veoit logié *rasibus* d'une grosse tour," &c.

CHAPTER IV.

TREATY OF PÉRONNE. — FINAL RUIN OF LIÉGE.

1468.

By the strict theory of feudalism, the sovereign, in alienating any portion of his domain, divested himself of all direct authority over the inhabitants and the soil. His power was to be thenceforth exercised by his immediate vassal, the holder of the fief, from whom he exacted homage, military service, and such other obligations as were expressed in the grant or implied by the nature of the feudal tie. But, in practice, it more often happened that some prerogative of sovereignty—the supreme jurisdiction, the right of imposing a tax, or the control of commerce and navigation—was reserved; and, even where no such reservation had been made, it might be deduced from analogy or precedent. Hence there were always openings for aggression and for controversy; and in the fifteenth century, when the struggle for power had become vehement and universal, such controversies were of perpetual occurrence. Many such discussions had arisen between the Duke of Burgundy and the king, and had been kept alive, rather than concluded, by the negotiations continually going on. It was the policy of Louis to impose every possible check on the power exercised by his rival; to remind him, on every occasion, of his dependent position; and to maintain a constant agitation of his own claims, even

when he saw no immediate prospect of being able to enforce them. But any change in the aspect of his affairs was sure to suggest a new and entirely different plan of operations. He had now come to Péronne prepared to surrender by treaty all the points in dispute. What he required in return was simply that Charles should bind himself to the faithful performance of his feudal obligations to adhere to his sovereign, and defend his cause against all his enemies and assailants. How far such a promise would be effective or sincere, to what extent it could be relied upon when the necessity should arise, must depend in some degree on the representations under which it was obtained, and on the impression which Louis might be able to produce upon a mind that had never yet proved susceptible to his influence. But, at all events, an immediate and real advantage would be gained. A treaty with the Duke of Burgundy of the same tenour as that which had just been signed by the Duke of Brittany would complete the dissolution of their alliance, deepen their present feelings of mutual anger and mistrust, and oppose a serious obstacle to the speedy formation of a similar confederacy. Accordingly, the king brought forward his proposal, the day after his arrival, in an interview at which, besides the principal parties, the cardinal and Biche seem to have been the only persons present.[1] Charles, with his accustomed directness, professed his willingness to promise aid and allegiance to his sovereign, but only under limitations which must render such a promise of little value in the eyes of the king. No offers or persuasions could induce him to renounce his alliances with other princes, formed for their mutual assistance and

[1] Lenglet, tom. iii. p. 21.

defence. However indignant he might be at the late defection of the Duke of Brittany, he knew that it could be only temporary, that his own position, and not that of Francis, must be the rallying ground of the league; and this position he was fully determined to maintain. A second interview, which took place on the following day, led to no alteration in his sentiments. Louis, therefore, had entirely failed in the object of his visit; and such, doubtless, under any circumstances, would have been the result. But for this disappointment he had been prepared from the moment when he awakened to the perception of his real situation. An embarrassment which he could neither conquer nor conceal had chilled his sanguine spirit and checked its versatile and vigorous play. The negotiation had lapsed into a mere formality. The impatience he now felt was to return to his own dominions. But the step which he had taken was not to be so easily retraced. It had brought him to a more critical point than he was yet aware of; and the issue was to be determined by another train of events coming suddenly into collision with that which has just been narrated.

In the repeated chastisements inflicted on the rebellious subjects of the Bishop of Liége, the Duke of Burgundy had only carried out the sentence pronounced by the pope. But Rome had long been unused to see its mandates thus literally executed. When the news of the destruction of Dinant and the conquest of Liége reached the papal court, they excited a universal feeling of compassion and dismay. The character and conduct of Louis of Bourbon were now fully understood and freely condemned. A conclave of cardinals was assembled; and Onofrio di Santa-Croce, Bishop of Tricaria, a pre-

late highly venerated for his illustrious birth and the benevolence of his character, was intrusted with a legatine commission to examine into the facts, to reconcile the people to their prince, and to heal, if possible, the wounds which, after each brief interval of quiet, opened and bled afresh.

At the present moment Liége was tranquil in its weakness and prostration. Its trade was utterly ruined, its population greatly reduced, its vital power seemingly extinct. Many thousands of its former inhabitants were roaming through the wild recesses of the Ardennes, enduring all the wants and miseries of savage life, untempered by the instincts and habits of a savage race. The Perron was gone; the Violet was empty and closed. There was no crowd or perpetual bustle in the streets and markets, no gathering or stormy discussion in the great square. The interdict being still in force, the churches were silent, and Sundays and holidays passed by unnoted and unobserved. The only sign of activity displayed was in the demolition of the walls and fortifications, which, under the direction of a Burgundian officer charged with the superintendence of the work, made slow but constant progress. Humbercourt, who had assumed the chief control of affairs, carried out the mandates of his master in the stern and unrelenting spirit in which they had been conceived—confiscating the property of the fugitives, and executing such of the more notorious offenders as had remained in the place or occasionally slunk back to it in the hope of escaping detection. Meanwhile the pecuniary demands of the conqueror were no longer to be satisfied with the promises and guaranties of an impoverished people; and the ecclesiastical corporations were com-

pelled to mortgage their possessions for the purpose of raising the requisite amount.[2]

The legate arrived in April; and, having been met and escorted into the city by the bishop and a solemn procession of the clergy and monastic orders, he proceeded to the cathedral, which he purified by aspersion with holy water, and, pronouncing the interdict dissolved, ordered the bells to be rung and a *Te Deum* to be chanted. On the following day Louis of Bourbon celebrated his first mass—twelve years after he had assumed the episcopal office. By this revival of the sacred rites and of that ecclesiastical pomp which, out of Italy, was nowhere exhibited with such magnificence as at Liége, the legate sought to obliterate some of the traces of its recent sufferings and to restore to the city some semblance of its former splendour and animation. Nor did he fail to express his sympathy with a people so long and so heavily afflicted. He undertook to mediate on their behalf with the Burgundian prince, and, after a visit to Bruges, returned with permission for the bishop, in concert with certain of the citizens, to draft a project for the re-establishment of the civic government, to be afterwards submitted for the approval of the duke. This concession, extorted with difficulty, proved, however, entirely fruitless. Louis of Bourbon, indifferent to the woes and the wishes of his subjects, after disgusting every eye with a succession of ill-timed festivities, again quitted the capital, on board of a gaily painted barge, and went to pass the summer at Maestricht, in the society of his favourites and in the amusements of a frivolous and dissolute life.[3]

[2] Adrianus de Veteri-Bosco, Ampliss. Col., tom. i. pp. 1224, 1225.

[3] Idem, p. 1226, et seq.—Excerpta ex Commentariis Jacobi Piccolomini, De Ram, p. 374.

Such was the state of affairs at Liége when rumours of impending war, and of immense preparations made by the King of France with the purpose of crushing the Duke of Burgundy, revived the hopes of those who, with so much reason, regarded the latter prince as their enemy and oppressor. Humbercourt was recalled by Charles to assist him in his measures for defence. The fermentation spread through all the border country; and the exiles, collecting together in bands, poured forth from the forest at various points into the valley of the Meuse, which they soon began to descend in the direction of the capital. Meeting with no opposition, they entered the city, about the beginning of September, with shouts of "*Vive le Roy!*" Their wild and squalid aspect, their haggard cheeks and matted hair, their half-naked bodies wasted by famine, struck all beholders with amazement and pity. They had ranged themselves under several leaders, of whom the principal, Jean de Ville and Vincent de Buren, were men of noble birth, bred in the manners and sentiments of chivalry, and distinguished by courage and address. Through the influence of these chiefs, the legate, now the only person in the capital invested with high official functions, succeeded in maintaining order, and in persuading the inhabitants to abstain from precipitate action and to promise an unqualified obedience to their prince on condition that he should return and establish a regular government. All classes, indeed, though excited by the prospect of recovering their independence, were weary of civil war, and acknowledged that it was better to live under any government, however arbitrary or severe, than in perpetual anarchy. To the exiles it seemed a sufficient happiness to find themselves in their former abodes,

amid kindred and friends, and the comforts, however scanty, of a civilized existence. "Better any fate," they exclaimed, "at home, than to live like beasts of prey with the recollection that we had once been men!" Filled with the earnest desire of effecting an arrangement on the terms proposed, the legate went in person to Maestricht, and succeeded in persuading Louis to set out with him for the capital. But, on their arrival at Tongres, three leagues from Liége, they were met by Humbercourt, with a body of troops despatched by Charles for the protection of the bishop, and with a message that the duke would shortly come, at the head of all his forces, to suppress and punish the revolt.

There now remained no chance for a peaceful solution of the difficulty. The bishop, readily abandoning a scheme which was foreign to his temper and inclinations, and yielding himself up to the direction of his powerful protector, fixed his residence at Tongres, and, in full security as to the event, relapsed into his ordinary habits. When this news was received in the capital, where his subjects had awaited him with a feeling of credulous enthusiasm,—preparing to go forth and meet him in the guise of supplicants, and, falling with their wives and children at his feet, to entreat his forgiveness and protection,—fury and desperation were roused in every breast. There was to be, then, no end of their calamities—no dawn after the dismal night! The merciful intentions of the Holy Father, who had sent a minister to pronounce their pardon and to alleviate their miseries, had availed them nothing. A new storm was gathering on the horizon, and well they knew how to calculate its progress and its strength. The excitement of the popular feeling was fanned by emissaries of the king—sent, indeed, at an earlier period, when the first

symptoms of a movement certain to provoke the anger of the Duke of Burgundy had suggested the use to which it might be turned : before Charles had consented to prolong the truce, and Louis had made a corresponding change in his own plans. De Ville and his associates exerted their influence with the people not to repress the agitation,—which, indeed, would have been impossible,—but to control and direct it to some practicable end. Since their prince had been intercepted in his return by the forces of the enemy, the most obvious course was to attempt his liberation, and, if successful, to conduct him to the capital, and carry out the project to which he had already given his consent and which had been sanctioned by the representative of Rome. The plan was skilfully arranged. Tongres, like the other towns, having levelled its defences in accordance with the recent treaty, every thing depended on the suddenness and stealthiness of the surprise. A party of two thousand picked men, well armed, and led by Jean de Ville,—himself a native of Tongres and the former captain of its garrison,—set out from Liége by night, found the Burgundian troops, though superior in numbers, wholly unprepared for the attack, and after a short conflict drove them in all directions from the town. A band was quickly posted around the houses occupied by Humbercourt and the bishop, who, roused from their slumbers by the tumult in the streets, sought in vain some mode of effecting their escape. The bishop's attendants, who attempted to bar the entrance, were speedily overpowered and cut down. But Bourbon himself was treated by his captors with all the outward tokens of respect and veneration. They couched their determination that he should return with them to Liége in the language of a supplication. The

legate, who was present, and who seemed not altogether dissatisfied with the turn which the affair had taken, counselled him to compliance. Having, in fact, no other resource, he submitted with apparent willingness to his fate. He consented to re-establish the civic government, accepted of De Ville as his grand-mayor, and declared that he would henceforth govern in accordance with the wishes of his people. The safety of his person would have been imperilled by a different course. The fierce spirit of a triumphant populace displayed itself in some excesses which the chiefs were powerless to prevent. Several of the canons of Saint Lambert's, who had long before been proclaimed traitors at the Perron, were murdered in the bishop's presence; and the archdeacon, Robert de Morialmé, a man especially hated for his haughty temper and contempt of the people, was hewn in pieces, and the fragments of his corpse hurled in brutal sport and with derisive shouts from hand to hand among the crowd. Humbercourt, on the contrary, being regarded merely as an open enemy, was treated with the courtesies of war; and De Ville, to whom he had surrendered himself, and who desired to avoid the appearance of offering a defiance to the duke, furnished him with the opportunity for escape.[4]

These occurrences took place on the night of October 9, the very day on which the king arrived at Péronne. The report was carried thither with a wonderful celerity. On the evening of the 11th it was communicated to the duke and circulated through the town, in a shape which it owed, perhaps, merely to the plastic hand of Rumour, but which was marvellously well suited to tell with due effect upon the present conjuncture. "Unnumbered atrocities had been

[4] Adrianus.—De Los.—Piccolomini.—Commines, &c.

committed by the men of Liége; the bishop, Humbercourt, the papal legate, had all been murdered; the envoys of the king were present, aiding and abetting in the commission of these crimes." That such a piece of news as this should stir to its depths a nature so intense and stormy in its passions as that of Charles—that the tide of his resentment should set with vehement and overwhelming force against the supposed contriver and instigator of the mischief—was natural: the more natural, the more certain, inasmuch as the king was not now at a distance, inaccessible, leaving others, his tools and victims, to bear the brunt of that wrath which he had urged them to provoke, but in the presence of his enemy, at his hearth, come hither to delude him with specious promises and counterfeited friendship, having all the while treachery and secret malice in his breast. A double train had been fired, without concert, yet simultaneously; and hence the violence of the explosion. At the moment when Louis, with eyes directed only on the fallacious prey, had broken from his covert, the bolt was shot that was to reach him just as he discovered his delusion. He had arrived at Péronne in the same hour as the most bitter and inveterate of his personal enemies. He had entered the castle while the men of Liége were setting out for Tongres. Not an eye that watched him to the place of refuge he had chosen but was fixed in wonderment and speculation. No one, however sage, however indifferent, but had asked the questions,—if not of others, yet of himself,—Would the arch-plotter be suffered to escape unharmed from this trap of his own setting? Would the arch-enemy, who had so lately menaced the house of Burgundy with destruction, and

who had desisted from an open attack only that he might first by secret craft undermine its foundations, be permitted, now that this latter purpose was frustrated, to depart and put in practice his earlier design? Every thing had conspired to the expectation, and through the expectation to the production, of a catastrophe. If nothing else, the sudden alarm which Louis had himself exhibited would have been sufficient to suggest it—an alarm which betrayed the instinctive habits of his own mind, which recalled every well known instance of his own perfidy and double dealing, and which seemed to anticipate the opportune and natural retribution.

That Charles should have witnessed this exhibition of fear, and listened to the surmises, the hints,—nay, rather to the positive suggestions and instigations,—of those who had so strong an interest in profiting by this rare opportunity, without feeling the influence of the temptation, is scarcely to be supposed. But his was not a nature to set aside, with cool deliberation or with an eagerness inspired by the mere facility of the act, those moral obstacles which stood in the way. It had needed the flood tide of passion to sweep down such a barrier; something was wanting to give an impetus to the current; and now, at the last moment, that impetus had come. Exclamations that he had been betrayed—that the king's visit and pretended desire for peace had been designed merely to lull him into a false security and to blind him to the foul villany that was concocting—were coupled with menaces, with vows that satisfaction should be exacted; and thus the first step—that which was necessary for securing the opportunity ere it slipped by—was easily made. Orders were issued that the gates of the castle and of the town

should be closed, the guards doubled, and no one permitted to enter or depart without the special licence of the duke. Even these measures, however, were not taken without an indication of his reluctance to commit himself irrevocably. It was given out that a casket of jewels had been missed, and that these precautions were adopted in order that a thorough search might be made. "A poor pretext," remarks Commines; but any pretext would have been idle to excuse the violation of a safe-conduct which declared that the king and his servants should meet with no hinderance or detention for any cause then existing or that might thereafter arise.[5]

We are told that Louis, in his eagerness for the interview, had forgotten the emissaries whom he had despatched to Liége.[6] With so many delicate wires to watch and govern, it was not surprising if they sometimes became tangled and the movements deranged. Yet he had probably no reason for calculating on an outbreak until his own attack should have given the signal; and the actual course of events owed little or nothing to his impulse or direction. But he had no sooner received the intelligence than he foresaw and prepared himself for the effect. He gave way to a most natural outburst of indignation at crimes so astounding, and protested loudly, *par la Pasque-Dieu*, that, if his fair cousin of Burgundy undertook the punishment of the perpetrators, he himself should desire to accompany and aid him.[7] Meanwhile he found himself a prisoner, deprived of the opportunity

[5] Commines, tom. i. pp. 161, 162.

[6] Idem, p. 159.

[7] "S'en esmerveilla fort, et de peur que mondit Sieur le Duc ne doutast qu'il fust occasion de ladite prise, jura la Pasque-Dieu, que se mondit Sieur de Bourgogne vouloit aller mettre le siege en ladite cité, qu'il iroit." Lenglet, tom. iii. p. 21.

of giving public expression to these sentiments, of manifesting his warm and entire sympathy with the general feeling. But it needed no communication from the outer world to inform him of what was there going on. The various "murmurs" throughout the town, the inquiries, the conjectures, the innumerable rumours that passed from mouth to mouth, the closed lips but grave and ominous looks of the officials, the movements of troops, the departure and arrival of messengers and couriers, were audible and visible enough to a fancy so suspicious and alert. Much, too, of what was passing in the council-chamber—the schemes for disposing of him and for profiting most largely by his folly: the extreme measures and vehement arguments of his more violent enemies, the cooler propositions of the more politic—would find a faithful and fearful echo in his own brain. He comprehended all the chances of his fate. He knew that the imprisonment of kings is seldom of a long duration;—if the body be not speedily released, the soul must be set free. His detention would occasion the establishment of a regency, and lead to an immediate war; by his death the crown would at once devolve upon his brother, whose right there was no one to dispute, whose authority, however foully acquired, must be acknowledged by all, and who would scarcely be disposed to call to a stern account those who had opened his pathway from exile to the throne. Whatever, therefore, could be done to influence the decision must be attempted at once. Louis had provided himself with a sum of money—fifteen thousand gold crowns—for such occasions of investment in the Burgundian court as might promise a return in secret intelligence and other friendly offices. He had now an ample

motive for the outlay. Some of his people, who had been lodged in the town, obtained permission to visit him, being admitted through the postern; and to them he was fain to intrust the distribution. But a great portion of the amount stuck in the pockets of his agents, who considered that the chance was small of their ever being summoned to a reckoning. Luckily, there were those who, whether in return for past favours, or in the expectation of future gratitude, or from motives of an altogether different character, had the inclination and the power to render him essential service in this most critical position.

During two days he remained in this suspense, and his fate was still undecided. The debates in the council were earnest and protracted. On one point alone there was unanimity of opinion. No one thought of proposing an unconditional release, a retraction from the course which had been entered upon under the impulse of passion, a return to the strict path of honour and good faith. The first step from that path was an irrevocable one. The assault had been committed; the risk had been incurred; and even those who desired that a retreat should be made must look for a secure route by which to effect it. Some were for going boldly forward to a prompt and conclusive solution. By others it was proposed that Charles of France should be sent for; that a treaty should be framed to include all the great princes; that the kingdom should be governed by them, and the king remain a prisoner by their authority and at their discretion. This view, urged by the smaller number but with the greater vehemence, seemed at one time about to prevail. Letters were written; and a courier, equipped for travel, waited only to receive his final orders from

the duke.[8] But the Chancellor of Burgundy[9] and a majority of the council—men who had received their training and formed their opinions and ideas in the service of Philip the Good, to whom there was still some sacredness in the royalty of France, some significance in the phrases of chivalry, some glory in the reputed honour of the house of Burgundy—were averse to projects of violence and flagrant treason that must cast even deeper odium on their sovereign than his grandfather had formerly incurred, and cause his reign, like that of John, to be one of turbulence and blood. The course which they proposed seemed to promise the double advantage of securing the spoils and suppressing the scandal. The king had come to Péronne with the avowed object of negotiating a treaty with Charles that should extinguish all existing causes of dissension; and he had intimated his readiness to make such concessions as were necessary for that end. Let a treaty, accordingly, be drawn up, with these and other provisions for satisfying the just demands of the duke, his vassals and allies, granting them redress for past injuries and security against future encroachments; and let this instrument be presented to Louis for his signature and oath. He had, also, of his own free impulse, declared his wish to assist in the punishment of Liége. Let the offer be accepted; let him, attended by a body of his own troops, accompany the Burgundian army in its expedition against the rebellious city. By such a course he would clear himself from the imputation of having instigated the revolt, stifle for ever the delusive hopes of the people founded on his former profes-

[8] "Furent les choses si pres, que je veiz ung homme housé et prest à partir, qui ja avoit plusieurs lettres addressantes à monseigneur de Normandie, estant en Bretaigne: et n'attendoit que les lettres du duc." Commines, tom. i. p. 172.

[9] Lamarche, tom. ii. p. 286.

sions, and convince the world that the enemies of the house of Burgundy had nothing to gain by accepting the King of France for their patron or by seeking his alliance and protection.

The heads of a treaty such as had been suggested were privately communicated to the king. His ministers attempted vainly to obtain some modification of the terms. But the question still remained whether Charles would give his final assent to this arrangement, or yield to the urgings of his more violent advisers and to those darker passions of his own breast which prompted him to a complete and adequate revenge. How intense was the struggle we may partly gather from the brief but graphic description left us by Philippe de Commines, who was then in close attendance on the duke's person, and, with one other chamberlain, remained in his apartment after the rest of the household had retired. The nights were sleepless, and passed in a perplexity and agitation scarcely more tolerable than the anxiety endured by the king. Sometimes Charles threw himself upon his couch, as if to still the fever that disordered his thoughts and prevented him from choosing his course with his usual clearness of intellect and rapidity of will. But, quickly starting from an attitude that was far from bringing him any interval of repose, he again paced the floor with a swift and heavy tread, at times venting his passion in broken but fiery exclamations, and anon turning to his companions and discussing, in a less abrupt if not less vehement tone, the provocation he had received and the satisfaction which it was in his power to extort.[10] The historian, who skilfully used

[10] Commines, tom. i. pp. 162, 173. —A letter, in Flemish, written from Péronne, on Oct. 14, to the magistrates of Ypres, contains an allusion to

these opportunities for allaying the storm, tells us that, had any of the personal enemies of the king been present, they would then have found little difficulty in effecting his ruin. But there was no lack, throughout the day, of occasions for fanning the flame; and this private and internal conflict was wholly natural in a mind so constituted, in which so much of violence and sternness was mingled with strong instincts of equity and honour. On the third morning (Friday, October 14), the fury of the duke's passion seemed to have attained its height. All were prepared for some terrible determination. But again the waves subsided. By a strong effort Charles appeared to clutch the decision which was at once the most politic and the least criminal; and, as if to allow of no time for the recurrence of a vacillation so foreign to his habitual temper, he summoned a few of his attendants, and, accompanied by them, suddenly presented himself before the king.

There had been time, however, for "a friend"—and we can have no hesitation in believing that Commines here indicates himself—to give warning privately to Louis of the visit he was about to receive, and of the hazard he would incur by failing to agree to any proposals that might be made.[11] Thus prepared, it cost him, nevertheless, a struggle to preserve an apparent composure at the abrupt entrance of the duke. His pallid look and shrinking attitude betrayed the apprehensions of his mind. "My cousin," he asked, "am I

the discussion of the previous night: "Want ic certifiere u dat het dezen nacht niet wel claer ghestaen heeft." Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. i. p. 200.

[11] The language of Commines himself is, "Le Roy eut quelque amy qui l'en advertit." Tom. i. p. 174. See Mdlle. Dupont's note, where, however, the date of 1470, instead of 1473, is erroneously given as that of the letters patent in which Louis acknowledges the "singular services" he had received from Commines while at Péronne. (Lenglet, tom. iv. par. 2, p. 133.)

not safe in your dominions and under your roof?" "So safe, Monseigneur," was the reply, "that were I to see an arquebuse aimed at you, I would place myself before you to receive the shaft."[12] But the voice which gave him this assurance trembled with suppressed passion; and, though Charles constrained himself to assume the attitude and language that became a vassal in the presence of his sovereign, his tones and gestures failed not to convey the fearful menace that was hovering on his lips.[13] Fixing his eyes on Louis, he inquired whether it were his pleasure to accept the treaty which had been submitted to his inspection. The king, acting on the hint that had been given him, hastened to declare that there was nothing which he so much desired as to lay this firm foundation of a lasting peace. Was he also prepared, in accordance with his previous offer, to join in punishing the treason committed by the people of Liége, in his name and under colour of his alliance,—nay, with his express sanction,—against his own kinsman, a brother of the Duke of Bourbon, a member of the royal house of Valois? To this question he again replied in the affirmative, repelling with much earnestness, though with little truth, the accusation against himself, and adding, "Let us first, fair cousin, confirm with our oaths the peace to which we have both agreed, and then I am ready to march with you against Liége with as few or as many troops as you may desire." The treaty was then produced; and, at the same time,

[12] "Si tost qu'il veit entrer le duc en sa chambre, il ne peu celer sa peur: et dit au duc, 'Mon frére, ne suis je pas seur en vostre maison, et en vostre païs?' Et le duc luy respondit, 'Ouy, Monsieur: et si seur, que, si je voyoye venir un trait d'arbaleste sur vous, je me mettroye audevant pour vous guarantir.'" Lamarche, tom. ii. p. 287.

[13] "La voix luy trembloit, tant il estoit esmeu et prest de se courroucer. Il feit humble contenance de corps, mais sa geste et parolle estoit aspre." Commines, tom. i. p. 174.

the king's attendants brought from his coffers, in which it was always carried, a piece of the true cross, called the Rood of Victory, or of Saint-Laud—the latter being the name of the shrine at Angers in which it had been deposited by Charlemagne, its original possessor. For this relic Louis was known to entertain an extraordinary veneration; and rumour attributed to him the belief, that, were he to break a vow thus witnessed, his life would end within the year. It was rarely, therefore, as may well be supposed, that its miraculous virtue was put to the test. But the present was not an occasion for any scruple or hesitation on such a point. The oath was administered by Cardinal Balue; the notary affixed his seal with the usual formalities; and, proclamation of the treaty being forthwith made, the bells of the town were rung in token of rejoicing. Afterwards the two princes dined at the same table, and rode together through the streets. It was necessary that the people should witness their cordiality and the joy of Louis at having effected a settlement the hope of which had brought him to Péronne.[14]

The instrument thus sworn to and thus published contained merely a summary of the various concessions granted by the king, and was in the nature, in fact, of a preamble to a more elaborate document, or series of documents, subsequently prepared and duly ratified, wherein all the articles were specified with the greatest minuteness and with the requisite forms. A perusal of the whole document carries with it the conviction that the Burgundian court was not less amply supplied with skilful lawyers and subtle casuists than with bold war-

[14] Commines, tom. i. p. 175.—Lamarche, tom. ii. p. 287.—Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. i. p. 200.—Lenglet, tom. i. pp. 17, 22, et al.—Letter of one of the king's attendants, Roye, Oct. 16, in Wavrin de Forestel, Anchiennes Cronicques, tom. ii. p. 381 et seq.

riors or with functionaries qualified to arbitrate on the nicest points of heraldry and of etiquette. No question that had ever been mooted between Charles or any of his predecessors and the French king was overlooked. Many privileges were extorted to which there had been before no claim or pretence. The border line of the king's dominions, where they trenched on those of the duke, was contracted and rigidly defined. Louis was made to relinquish inherent rights and inalienable prerogatives of his crown. The courts of Flanders were relieved from the appellate jurisdiction of the Parliament of Paris. The sanction of the sovereign was given to the alliance subsisting between his vassal and the King of England, "our enemy and adversary." Not the least remarkable clauses were those by which security was taken against any violation of the treaty, and a mode provided for obtaining redress. Should Louis fail, in any particular, to carry into effect the obligations he had contracted, or hereafter rescind them, or fraudulently evade them, or connive at such evasion by others, the Duke of Burgundy and his heirs, their subjects and their states, were to be thenceforth and for ever absolved from their allegiance to the crown of France, relieved from every demand of homage, service, feudal aids, or other mark of subjection. In the same event, all the princes of the blood were authorized and even expressly commanded, not merely in these general terms, but by letters bearing the sign manual and severally addressed to each,—letters which were actually written and despatched,—to levy war upon the monarch and to aid the injured party with all the means and power at their command in the recovery of his rights. The Church was invited, in the like contingency, to hurl its inter-

dicts, excommunications, "aggravations and reaggravations," at the person and dominions of the Most Christian King, who hereby renounced, for himself and his successors, the ancient claim of their line to exemption from ecclesiastical censures. In a word, the penalties which Louis would incur by any failure to comply with his engagements would amount to a forfeiture of his sovereignty and possessions.[15]

There was but one flaw to be discovered in the treaty. It was too carefully, too skilfully, too elaborately drawn. It bore on every line the stamp of its origin; it revealed the whole story of the circumstances under which it had been framed. No one could imagine that this was such an arrangement as Louis himself had had in contemplation. No one would be induced to believe that he had descended from his strong position for the mere purpose of listening to "the complaints and grievances" of his cousin of Burgundy, of giving to every statement *seriatim* an unqualified assent, of meeting every demand with an unconditional compliance.[16] Though he himself should be as desirous of hiding his folly and humiliation as his enemies of concealing their perfidy and violence, the proofs would be patent and irrefragable. Cannons might roar and bonfires blaze in celebration of the peace;[17] but the public eye would penetrate through the smoke and flame, through the thick walls of the castle of Péronne, to a

[15] Lenglet, tom. iii. pp. 22-64.

[16] "S'ensuivint les doleances, remonstrances et requestes de nostredit frere et cousin, avec les provisions et responses par nous à luy accordées sur chacune d'icelles. . . . Sur cette article a esté repondu de par le Roy, qu'il est content," &c. Such is the form of the treaty.

[17] Rejoicings were everywhere ordered by the king. We find Charles, on the other hand, forbidding the peace to be celebrated in his dominions till after his return from Liége. Gachard, Doc. Inéd., tom. i. p. 199.

dungeon where the king, surrounded and menaced by his jailors, wrote with a trembling hand whatever they chose to dictate.

It is remarkable that no mention is to be found in the treaty of a provision which it is nevertheless certain, from the testimony of well informed writers as well as from the subsequent course of events, made an important part of the arrangement. It would indeed have been strange if the claims of Charles of France had been overlooked on an occasion like the present; but, though the terms of the settlement are known, it is uncertain whether they formed the subject of a separate and secret treaty or of a mere verbal engagement. The king was not again compelled—perhaps, even in his present circumstances, could not have been compelled—to surrender Normandy into the hands of his brother. His own former offer of Champagne and La Brie was now renewed and accepted, with the more readiness inasmuch as these provinces marched with the Burgundian dominions, and would be occupied, defended, and controlled by the forces and authority of the Burgundian prince.

During the absence of Louis the Count of Dammartin remained in command of the royal army. His responsibilities, at such a conjuncture, must be of the gravest description. He could not be ignorant of much that was passing at Péronne—of the violation of the safe-conduct, of the indications that some further movement was in contemplation or in progress. Yet it was necessary for him to act with the greatest caution. Any step taken hastily or in the dark would only have the effect of adding to the embarrassments and perils of a situation from which there was no possibility of immediate and forcible extrication. While, therefore, he

strengthened himself with fresh reinforcements,[18] and sent notice to the Burgundian court of his purpose and preparations to protect or avenge his master, he abstained from any overt act of hostility. To letters which he received from the king commanding him to retire from the frontier[19] he gave small heed. Even if genuine, he could scarcely regard them as voluntary acts of the person whose signature they bore. Yet there can be little doubt that in giving these orders Louis was perfectly sincere.[20] He was now reconciled to his fate. One effort he had made to escape what he justly considered as the most grievous of the penalties imposed upon him. He had endeavoured to obtain a release from his promise to accompany Charles to Liége,[21] offering, if permitted to return to France, to exert his

[18] We find a general levy ordered in Paris on Oct. 8, on the very eve of the meeting at Péronne. (De Troyes, p. 76.) It might be inferred that Louis himself, even at the moment of taking this rash leap, was not without apprehension as to the result.

[19] Cabinet de Louis XI.; Lenglet, tom. ii. p. 227, et seq.

[20] There is a striking difference, in the style and form of expression, between the two letters. It does not follow, however, that the first—so cold, formal, prolix, and uncharacteristic—must, as Michelet suggests, have been either forged or written under a compulsory dictation. It seems to indicate rather a temporary mental paralysis. The constraint is internal, but it is not the less hard and benumbing. In the second letter, of precisely the same purport, written some days later, from Namur, Louis is all himself. The style is very characteristic: "Tenez vous seur, que je ne vay en ce voyage du Liége par contrainte nulle, et que je n'allay oncques de si bon cœur en voyage comme je fais en cettuy-cy. . . . Monsieur le Grand Maistre, mon ami, vous m'avez bien monstre que m'aimez, et m'avez fait le plus grand service que pourriez faire; car les gens de Monsieur de Bourgogne eussent cuidé, que je les eusse voulu trompre, et ceux de pardela eussent cuidé, que j'eusse esté perdu prisonnier; ainsi par défiance les uns des autres, j'éstois perdu." Lenglet, tom. ii. p. 228.

[21] "Se voulut repentir de son voyage de Liége." Lenglet, tom. iii. p. 22.—Louis seems to have been sanguine of obtaining his release within a few days; and it was apparently under a representation of this kind, and to facilitate the object, that Dammartin consented to withdraw a portion of his forces. See the letter written by the bearer of the royal orders, in Wavrin de Forestel, tom. ii. p. 382.

influence with his allies for the purpose of inducing them to make reparation for the wrongful acts they had committed,—the nature and extent of which were now better known,—and promising, if he failed in this attempt, to return within a stated time and fulfil his original contract. He proposed to leave as hostages the constable, the Duke of Bourbon, and other great nobles and ministers of state, who, though inwardly convinced that no considerations in regard to their safety would induce the king again to jeopardize his own person, professed in public their willingness to become his sureties.[22] But he who lies beneath the lion's paw does wisely in refraining from any attempt, in suppressing even the inclination, to rise. Warned of the danger and the hopelessness of further resistance, Louis ceased to struggle with his bonds. From that moment he seems to have recovered his habitual cheerfulness and self-possession. Every sign of reluctance and of timidity disappeared. He entered with alacrity, with histrionic fervour, on the performance of his shameful task. His pages and other attendants were in a state of bewilderment and terror, expecting every moment to be set upon and slaughtered.[23] But there was nothing in the demeanour of the king himself to indicate the pressure of a terrible necessity. It might rather have been supposed that the expedition against

[22] "Ceulx que le Roy nommoit pour estre ostaiges, se offroient fort, au moins en public. Je ne scay s'ilz disoient ainsi à part; je me doubte que non. Et à la verité, je croy qu'il les y eust laissez, et qu'il ne fust pas revenu." Commines, tom. i. p. 172.

[23] "Warend all Stund warten, wenn man uns an die Köpf schlög. . . . Warend in grossen Sorgen Lybs und Lebens by den Burgunern; denn wa sie Ein heimlich mochten vertwuschen, das beschach." (Ludwigs von Diesbach Selbstbiographie, Der Schweizerische Geschichtforscher, B. viii. s. 173.) An exaggeration, we may hope. Diesbach, who was then a mere child, retained in his later years a vivid recollection of the fears and perils of this journey.

Liége was a project of his own conception, the crowning achievement of his negotiations at Péronne.[24]

By the permission—or perhaps by the special desire—of the duke, he had made a requisition on his lieutenant for three hundred men-at-arms; and this small troop was promptly sent as a means, however insufficient, of affording him protection. On the 17th the two princes set out for Namur. The lilies of France were unfurled beside the standard of Burgundy. The royalists, in obedience to their master's orders, assumed the badge of Burgundy, which he himself wore conspicuously displayed among the leaden images on his hat. Marching "like a mercenary" in the ranks of his foes,—of those whom he feared and detested, and by whom he was feared and detested in turn,—against the most faithful of his allies, against those who, so often forsaken, had never forsaken him, he seemed content with his situation, at ease with his own heart, secure of the good opinion of the world. Strange spectacle! strange king![25]

[24] Perhaps the strongest proof of his entire satisfaction with his situation is to be found in his recovery of his powers of sarcasm. One of his attendants received a letter from Duplessis, the king's secretary, begging that his master might be informed that he was ready to join him, at the risk of his life, if required, but intimating a belief that he should be murdered, and begging that he might be excused from giving this proof of his devotion. Louis, who had with him "the barber," and one or two other persons, listened to this statement with much good humour. "I am sure," he replied, "that Duplessis would come at my request, if he should die for it. But let him not come; for, if he does, he will certainly die—on the way—*of fright*." See the letter before cited in Wavrin de Forestel, tom. ii. p. 381-383.

[25] "Præclarum et memorabile facinus hujus regis Francorum, cui fortassis vix simile aliud vel in veteribus annalibus, vel in recentioribus historiis poterit facile inveniri," &c. Basin tom. iii. p. 203; and see p. 209—in both places, a vehement and exulting tirade. Even the exile at Trèves finds consolation and revenge in this abasement of the "tyrant."

But, while we marvel at the facility and apparent satisfaction with which he carried his heavy burden of dishonour, we cannot, like some of his contemporaries, regard this exhibition with feelings of unmixed contempt. His fortitude and self-command were not less conspicuous than his insensibility to shame. Those who had presented him with the bitter cup watched all his words and gestures, and every shadow that passed across his face.[26] Charles had been advised that it was unnecessary for him to lead his whole army against an enemy who had so often recoiled before his attacks. His forces amounted to forty thousand men, and it was doubtful whether Liége could send half that number into the field; while, in its present state, the city was incapable of enduring a siege, and might be expected to fall at the first onset. But he refused to dispense with any of the resources at his command. With such an ally in his camp, no precaution was superfluous. A secret missive, a mere hint, would be sufficient to bring Dammartin upon the scene of action. That the latter might not wait for any hint was the secret apprehension of Louis.

The Burgundian army entered the principality in two divisions—the first, under the Marshal of Burgundy, who was accompanied by Du Lau and the other French refugees, being a day's march in advance. Having captured Tongres and other towns, and laid waste the surrounding country, the marshal continued his approach towards the capital. On the 22nd he was encountered by a body of twelve thousand men, and a sanguinary engagement took place, in which

[26] See Commines, tom. i. pp. 185, 186.

the Burgundians were at first overmastered and compelled to retreat. But reinforcements arriving, under the Sire de Ravenstein, the superiority in numbers as well as in discipline and arms decided the day. The men of Liége were utterly routed, and left behind them more than two thousand slain. A party of five hundred, posted in a mill, which they defended with desperate valour, perished to a man.[27]

Two days later, the bishop, the legate, and one of the newly elected burgomasters made their appearance in the camp. They had been sent at the suggestion of the legate, in the hope that their intercession might still avail to obtain some terms of grace. But the sole petition they ventured to prefer—that the lives of the inhabitants might be spared—was scornfully rejected. In the opinion not only of his own adherents, but of persons not too favourable to his cause, Charles had already treated Liége with undeserved clemency.[28] It was no mere feat of arms that he now contemplated, but the complete eradication of a virulent pest which had proved incurable by ordinary means. The burgomaster was sent in chains to Maestricht; the bishop was detained to bear his part in the triumph; while the legate, whose humane proceedings were attributed to sinister motives, received a contemptuous dismissal and was conducted from the principality.[29]

[27] "Furent là faites de grans vaillances d'une part et d'autre, et se vendirent bien les villains, lesquelx à la fin y demeurerent tous mors avec leurdict capitaine; et ne print l'on point cedict jour ung seul prisonnier, ains fut tout mis à l'espee; : . . et fut brullé ledict moustier et villaige." Letter of Jean de Mazilles, a Burgundian officer present, Nov. 8, in Commines, Preuves, tom. iii. p. 245.

[28] See, in particular, the remarks of Commines (tom. i. p. 201), who, on the whole,—his peculiar position, his character, and his intellect, all considered,—is the best representative of the ideas and opinions, or perhaps we should rather say of the enlightenment, of his age.

[29] Piccolomini.—Commines.—After

Shorn of its fortifications, Liége was still protected by a semicircular range of hills enclosing it on the north and extending on either side to the river. In some places the slopes were gradual, and covered, then as now, with gardens and vineyards. But, for the most part, this district could be safely traversed, especially in the dark, only by those who were thoroughly familiar with it. Taking advantage of this circumstance, and of the cold, autumnal rains which had flooded the low lands and impeded the operations of the foe, De Ville, at the head of a picked band, made a sortie, on the night of the 26th, against the Marshal of Burgundy, whose forces were stationed in the suburbs. The archers, thrown into confusion, lost more than eight hundred of their number. Humbercourt, the Prince of Orange, and other men of note, were wounded. But most of the men-at-arms remained firm, opened a fire from their artillery against one of the gates which had been repaired, and through which the people offered to sally, and, as soon as the dawn had revealed the inferiority of their assailants, drove them back with slaughter into the town. De Ville, mortally wounded in the retreat, expired on the following day.[30]

A final and daring effort was made by the besieged on the night of Saturday, October 29. The Burgundian troops, posted at their respective stations, had completed their preparations for the assault, which was ordered for the next morning. When all was silent and obscure six hundred intrepid men passed across the ruined walls, descended by a precipitous

his return to Italy he fell into disgrace, in consequence of the ill success of his mission; and the mortification he endured is said to have occasioned his death. De Ram, p. 316.

[30] Adrianus, Ampliss. Col., tom. iv. p. 1339.—Commines, tom. i. p. 179, et seq.

path and through a watery ravine to the valley lying between the citadel and the Faubourg Sainte-Walburge, and, ascending the opposite heights, directed their march, silently and vigilantly, but with as much speed as the rugged ground would permit, towards the quarters occupied by the two princes, Charles of Burgundy and Louis of France—names now united in the curses of a downtrodden and expiring people.

They were natives—the persons composing this adventurous band—of Franchimont, a little mountain territory south of Liége, famous for its black marbles and other valuable minerals, and inhabited by a hardy race of people, whose traditions were full of wild exploits that made nothing seem impossible to bold hearts and sinewy limbs. Their present enterprise might well have appeared a desperate one; yet it was, in truth, sagaciously planned, and not unworthy of men who, in their extremity, had lost neither hope, nor courage, nor the ability to profit by the last remaining chances of redemption.

In order to complete the investment on the northern side, and obtain the means of operating simultaneously in the assault, the Burgundian army had been compelled to extend its lines around the amphitheatre of hills already mentioned; and its communications were lengthened and impeded by deep chasms, precipitous spurs, and other difficulties of the ground. A circuit of full three leagues was necessary in passing from one to the other of the extreme wings; while, within the city, the march between these points was short, direct, and over streets that might be considered as broad and level when compared with the winding paths without. On this foundation the plan had been formed for the

sudden discomfiture of a foe far too powerful to be encountered in the field, or opposed with any prospect of success at his intended entrance, in the broad day, into a defenceless place. The men of Franchimont, fitted for such a service by the habits of their mountain life, were to penetrate to the hostile camp by a route so wild and untraversed that there was no apprehension of its being found defended by outposts. Guided by the owners of the two houses in which the duke and the king had fixed their quarters, they were to glide or burst through the guards, make their way straight to the sleeping apartments of the princes, and slay them both before succour could arrive. As soon as the event might be supposed to be determined, or at a signal agreed upon, the people were to make a general sally by a street or causeway leading directly to the suburbs, in the hope that the besieging army, taken by surprise, bewildered by the darkness, by its want of familiarity with the ground, and by the confusion and irresolution that would naturally follow the loss of its commander, might be thrown into panic and be smitten with irretrievable disaster.

The little party to whom the chief and most hazardous share of this enterprise had been committed succeeded in reaching the *faubourg*—a mere cluster of farm-houses and cottages—without creating an alarm. It was still early; but, with the exception of a few sentinels, who were quickly and silently disposed of, all seemed profoundly still. The duke, having for several previous nights taken little or no repose, had disarmed and retired to rest. Commines and one or two other favourite attendants slept in the same chamber; while, in the room above, some archers, intrusted

with the watch, were engaged in playing at dice. The house was connected with a smaller dwelling, where the king lay, by a long and narrow building, intended for a granary, but now occupied by a party of soldiers, who had pierced the walls so as to command the open space on either side. These precautions had been taken, however, not in anticipation of an attack by the enemy, but to guard against any sudden act of treachery on the part of Louis, whose Scottish archers were under the same roof with himself, while his men-at-arms were scattered through the neighbouring village. So profound was the jealousy still entertained of an ally who, throughout the operations, had preserved the same frank and cordial demeanour, and given frequent proofs of the loyalty of his intentions!

Had the assailants gone straight to the doors, it is probable—or was at least thought so by those who were on the spot—that their purpose would have been accomplished. But coming unexpectedly on a pavilion belonging to the Count of Perche, and supposing perhaps that it was occupied by a guard, they pierced it with their pikes and aroused the inmates. Some of these were slain, but not without a disturbance that attracted the attention of the archers and awoke the troops stationed in the granary. Attempting to sally, the Burgundians found themselves engaged with an enemy whose character and numbers they were alike unable to conjecture. The duke, meanwhile, having hastily donned some portion of his armour, descended, sword in hand, to the street, followed by his attendants. So great was the press around the door that several minutes elapsed before they could fight their way out.

When they succeeded the tumult had become general. The soldiers from the village and other stations were hurrying to the spot; torches were beginning to gleam; the royal archers, remaining under cover, as bound to shelter the king's person, discharged showers of arrows from the windows, indifferent whether they lighted on friend or foe; while the war-cries of Burgundy and France—"*Vive Bourgogne!*" "*Vive le Roy et tuez!*"—were answered by similar exclamations in the peculiar dialect of Liége. Detected, hemmed in, and overwhelmed by superior numbers, the men of Franchimont could not long maintain the unequal combat. But they sold their lives dearly—killing above two hundred of their foes, wounding many more, and fighting with desperate courage to the last. Whether any escaped, or sought to escape, remained a matter of uncertainty. The ground was strewn with corpses, which no one cared to count; though history may not refuse its meed of glory to the prowess and heroism of these nameless dead.[31]

Such an act of daring seemed to indicate a more determined resistance than the besiegers had prepared themselves to encounter. A sortie, as had been agreed upon, was also attempted by the main avenues; and, though easily repulsed by strong bodies of troops posted at those points, had the effect of keeping the

[31] Commines, liv. ii. ch. 12.—Adrianus, Ampliss. Col., tom. iv. p. 1341.—Theodoricus Paulus, De Ram, p. 220.—Letter of Jean de Mazilles, Dupont, tom. iii. p. 246.—Haynin, tom. i. p. 140.—Diesbach, in Der Schweizerische Geschichtforscher, B. viii. s. 173.—Gerlache, Révolutions de Liége, p. 133, et seq.—Bovy, Promenades Historiques, tom. i. pp. 29, 44, et al.—Basin, tom. ii. p. 201, et seq.—Wavrin de Forestel, tom. ii. pp. 387, 388. The number of the Franchimontois is variously stated at from three to six hundred. The latter, which is the number given by Commines, has received a certain sanctity from the local traditions.

whole camp in alarm throughout the night. Louis advised that the assault should be postponed until the spirit of the besieged was more effectually subdued. He, more than any other, was anxious for the complete success of the Burgundian arms. Liége was the bridge over which alone he could hope to return to his own dominions; and he dreaded the effect of any disaster or reverse on the moody and violent nature of his kinsman.[32] But the duke, still suspicious in regard to every suggestion from that quarter, chose to attribute this advice to lack of physical courage, and intimated that the king, if he were so minded, might retire to Namur and await the event. When, however, he found Louis, in the morning, at the head of his little troop, mounted and armed, and prepared to take part in the assault, he endeavoured, with more courtesy, as well as with greater sincerity, to dissuade him from thus exposing his person. The monarch with his accustomed smile, persisted in his purpose. "My brother," he said, "let us advance. You are to-day the most fortunate prince alive!"[33] To his own followers he cried, "Forward, my children! Let the word be 'Burgundy!'"[34]

But the victory was already achieved, and nothing remained but to secure the fruits. Not the least resist-

[32] "Entra le Roy en grant doubte; et en estoit la cause qu'il avoit paour que se ledict duc failloit à prendre ceste cité d'assault, que le mal en tomberoit sur luy, et qu'il en seroit en dangier d'estre arresté, ou prins de tous pointz: car le duc auroit paour que, s'il partoit, il ne luy feist la guerre d'aultre costé." Commines, tom. i. p. 192.

[33] "Ne voulut souffrir que le Roy se mist en ce danger; et luy pria de demourer jusques il le manderoit; et j'ouy que le Roy luy dit: 'Mon frère, marchez avant, car vous estes le plus heureux prince, qui vive.'" Lamarche, tom. ii. p. 288.

[34] "Avant, enfans, criez Bourgoigne." Haynin, tom. i. p. 142.

ance was offered; and the army, in three divisions, entered the town from as many different quarters, with ranks unbroken, banners flying, trumpets sounding, and shouts of "*Ville gaignée!*" that passed along the advancing columns from front to rear. The streets leading to the great square had been deserted by all save a few stragglers, who were cut down—men and women—by the brutal and impatient soldiery. The houses, too, seemed vacant; though the tables spread for the morning repast showed how recently the occupants had fled.[35] The forces under the Marshal of Burgundy were the first to reach the square, where they planted their standard and remained in order of battle. The duke, with the main corps, arrived in the opposite direction, and was followed by the king, elate with triumph, waving his naked sword, and crying "*Vive Bourgogne!*" with the full strength of his lungs.[36] As soon as it was clear that no further resistance need be apprehended, the troops were distributed throughout the city, a separate district being assigned to each division. Within those limits all was to be theirs. On a former occasion they had been defrauded of what they considered as the proper reward of their achievements. But now there was no restriction, no cause for secresy or fear. Rapacity, cruelty, lust,—all the foul desires of the unbridled heart,—were to rage with licence and impunity.

The greater number of the inhabitants had already retreated across the bridge to the southern shore, with

[35] "En chascune maison trouvasmes la nappe mise." Commines, tom. i. p. 194.

[36] Adrianus, Ampliss. Col., tom. iv. p. 1343.—Letter of Anthoine de Loisey, Nov. 4, Lenglet, tom. iii. p. 82.—Letter of Jean de Mazilles, Dupont, tom. iii. p. 248.

the purpose of seeking refuge in the neighbouring woods. But many had concealed themselves in their dwellings; while others, as usual at such times, had sought sanctuary in the sacred edifices, taking with them the most valuable or least bulky of their effects. There were more than four hundred churches in Liége,[37] where as many masses were recited daily as in Rome itself.[38] The pompous rite was even then proceeding; psalms and anthems, selected for their appropriateness to the occasion, had been chanted by the priests;[39] the swinging censer diffused its clouds, heavy with odours, above the worshippers; and the tinkling bell, that announced the elevation of the host, was followed, as ever, by moments of absorbed and silent adoration. The sounds which broke that silence were not the triumphal notes of praise ascending to Heaven, but the clamours of Hell. Eyes flaming with demoniac passions glared upon the scene. Shrieks and curses succeeded; the clang of steel; the fall of slaughtered bodies on the marble pavement. Booty was the primary object; but every where the track of the devastators was marked with blood. It flowed in rivulets upon the floors. The vestments of the officiating clergy were sprinkled with the crimson drops. In one church twenty-two persons were slain while kneeling in prayer; in another eleven were killed, and many wounded left

[37] Letter of Jean de Mazilles, Dupont, tom. iii. p. 247.

[38] "J'ay ouy dire à monseigneur de Humbercourt, qui congnoissoit bien la cité, qu'il s'y disoit autant de messes par jour comme il se faisoit à Romme." Commines, tom. i. p. 196.

[39] "In matutinis cantatum fuit *Vidi Dominum*; et *Aspice Domine quia desolata est civitas plena divitiis.* Et in introitu majoris missæ, *Omnia quæ fecisti nobis Domine*; et in evangelio, *Missis exercitibus suis perdidit homines illos, et civitatem eorum succendit.*" Adrianus, Ampliss. Col., tom. iv. p. 1342.

weltering in their gore. In all, or nearly all, the same atrocities were enacted. The habits of a superstitious awe were curiously blended with open sacrilege. In some instances the celebrants were requested to remove the elements before delivering up the vessels that contained them. At the Church of the Minorites, a soldier was seen waiting for the priest to complete the consecration ere he snatched the costly chalice from his grasp. Another, at Saint Peter's, while the priest was in the act of upraising the host, offered no interruption, but, slipping a hand beneath the folds of his vestment, dexterously eased him of his purse. The ornaments of the altars, the images, the reliquaries, were seized and appropriated. The monuments were broken, the tombs entered and despoiled. The convents were forced, the nuns violated. Neither age, sex, nor condition was respected. Where life was spared, it was in the hope of extorting ransom, or, more often, in order that death might be inflicted at greater leisure and with greater barbarity.[40]

[40] Adrianus, Ampliss. Col., tom. iv. —Theodoricus Paulus, De Ram, pp. 223, 224.—Joannes de Los, De Ram, p. 61.—Henricus de Merica, De Ram, p. 179.—Commines makes no mention of these scenes. He says that the number slain in the streets, on the entrance of the troops, did not exceed 200. The churches, he says, were sacked, and those who were present made prisoners. But Commines himself was in close attendance on the duke; Saint Lambert's was the only church he entered; and his narrative was written many years after the event. It is impossible to reject the testimony of Adrianus, who was going about the city during the day to obtain protection for his convent, who kept a diary from which he afterwards composed his work, and who writes in the most impartial, unimpassioned, and matter-of-fact style. Hardly less credence is due to the account written, "petitione aliquorum honestorum, sub omni fide," by Theodoricus Paulus from the information he had received from one of the actors—"ab honesto viro Jacobo Deyn, qui est juratus balistarius et custos corporis principis Karoli, ac etiam balluis de Arden in comitate de Ghisen;" (De Ram, p. 231); or to that of Henricus de Merica, prior of a convent in Louvain, who had ample means of information, and whose narrative bears the date of

Some efforts were made to restrain the fury of the soldiery, which had burst forth with a violence, or had perhaps taken a direction, not altogether anticipated. Humbercourt, who was still suffering from his wound, caused himself to be carried in a litter to the Church of Saint Jacques, and succeeded in saving that sumptuous edifice—"the marvel of Liége"—from spoliation. The duke went in person to the cathedral, and expelled the depredators, after he had slain one or more of them with his own sword.[41] With these and possibly a few other exceptions, all the churches were completely sacked.[42] Treasure so enormous in amount, and so attractive from the dazzling forms in which it was displayed, became naturally the first prize of the cupidity which it was so well adapted to inflame.

A proclamation was issued, on the following day, permitting aged persons, women, and children of tender years to quit the place. Boats were provided for conveying the members of the monastic orders and females of the better classes to Maestricht.[43] The remaining

1468-9. Haynin says (tom. i. p. 142) that the number slain on the first day, "men and women, old and young," was above a thousand. Jean de Mazilles, in a letter from Liége dated Nov. 8, after describing the assault, says that the prisoners taken during the operation were thrown into the river. Dupont, tom. iii. p. 247.

[41] Lamarche, tom. ii. p. 289.—Commines (who saw him kill one), tom. i. p. 196.—"Evaginato gladio vix potuit cohibere, ne frangerent sacristiam." Adrianus, Ampliss. Col., tom. iv. p. 1343.—Henricus de Merica, De Ram, p. 181; and Theodoricus Paulus, ibid., p. 213.

[42] "Toutes les eglises, ainsi que la cité, ont esté pillees, reservé Sainct Lambert, qui est la grant eglise, que mondict seigneur a reservee." Letter of Anthoine de Loisey, Nov. 3, Lenglet, tom. iii. p. 83.—"Toutes les eglises, au nombre de plus de IIIIc, ont esté pillees, desrobees, desolees." Letter of Jean de Mazilles, Nov. 8, Dupont, tom. iii. p. 247.

[43] Theodoricus Paulus, De Ram, p. 224.—Priests, nuns, monks, begging friars, and other ecclesiastics, departed, taking with them whatever they could snatch from the rapine. Two or three monks remained in charge of each convent. Adrianus boasts that in his

inhabitants were left entirely to the discretion of their captors. It was not so much a wanton carnage that ensued as a long series of cold-blooded murders. Hanging was a favourite mode of disposing of the prisoners. Some were thrown from the roofs of houses, and the mangled corpses left unburied in the streets. But, in general they were collected in gangs, driven upon the bridge, tied together "in twos or threes," and hurled into the flood beneath.[44] It would be idle to attempt any estimate of the numbers that perished. Some writers have swelled it to an incredible amount.[45] The most trustworthy authorities furnish us with no sufficient data. Commines, with his usual lack of interest in such details, contents himself with the statement that "great numbers of the poor people were drowned"—excusing the cruelty, which he admits was practised, on the plea of ample and oft-repeated provocations. A cavalier of noble family, writing from Liége, on November 8, to his sister in Burgundy, after expressing some regret for the destruction of property which he had witnessed, says that the dead are reckoned at between four and five thousand.[46] The discrepancies

own monastery, that of Saint Lawrence, all remained except the abbot and two others, and that the sacred services were not intermitted "a single hour" throughout the sack or the destruction that succeeded. Ampliss. Col., tom. iv. p. 1344.

[44] "Twelke afgriselye ende deerlyk van ziene was." Gachard (from the Register of Ypres), Doc. Inéd., tom. i. p. 202.—And see Adrianus, De Los, Theodoricus Paulus, &c.

[45] To forty, and even sixty, thousand! Gerlache and other modern authors adopt these statements, which rest on no historical authority, unless the tedious bombast of Angelus de Curribus (whose Latin poem "De Excidio Civitatis Leodiensis" was written for the purpose of celebrating the unfortunate mission of his patron the bishop of Tricaria) is to be accepted as such.

[46] "Est moult grant pitié de veoir les maulx qui se font. . . . L'on estime estre mors desdicts Lyégois, pour tous poutaiges, de IIII à Vm hommes." Letter of Jean de Mazilles, Dupont, Preuves, tom. iii. p. 247.

on this point, however, are of little consequence. What is certain is, that nothing less was intended and deliberately aimed at than utter extermination; and that, whether by the summary modes already mentioned, or through a slower and still more horrible process,—the flight and expulsion from their homes, at an inclement season, of vast multitudes in a wholly destitute condition; their dispersion through the forests, where "many died of hunger, cold, or weariness;" the chase maintained, not only by the Burgundian troops, but by armed bands collected by the neighbouring nobles and prelates with the view of propitiating the favour of the duke; and, in fine, the suffering, mental as well as physical, of which there remains no account in any earthly record,—the object was at least approximately attained.

Fate had assigned to the French monarch the fool's part in this dismal tragedy; and he played it, without any signs of flagging, to the close. Escorted, on his entrance, to the bishop's palace, he had, with his accustomed modesty, declined to occupy the state apartments, insisting that these should be reserved for the duke, to whom belonged of right the honours of the occasion.[47] At dinner he was in the best of spirits, and discoursed with extreme vivacity to his attendants —his only theme, the prowess and happy fortune of his fair cousin of Burgundy. Still louder were the eulogies, still more fervent the congratulations, when Charles, returning from Saint Lambert's, joined him at table. They made "great cheer" together.[48] The events of the day seemed to have the effect of com-

[47] Theodoricus Paulus, de Ram, p. 224.
[48] Commines, tom. i. pp. 196, 197.

pletely re-establishing the *entente cordiale.* The duke had a question for his royal guest: What was to be done with Liége when evacuated by the troops—when the city, once so full of life, so noisy and tumultuous, was empty and silent? But one reply was possible—that which might be read in the countenance of the questioner. But how ready the wit which, at such a moment, framed this graceful apologue by way of answer!—"My father, on a certain time, had a high tree near his house; and the crows that built their nest in its branches disturbed his slumbers. He caused the nest to be removed, but the crows built again; and a second time, but they still returned. At last he had the tree cut down—at the roots—and after that slept quietly."[49]

The duke continuing in this serene and amicable temper, Louis caused him to be privately sounded on the subject that was ever uppermost in his own mind, carefully as he had hitherto suppressed every indication of his feelings—his dismissal, with permission to return to France.[50] He had faithfully and loyally complied with all the stipulations of the agreement. He had accepted of the ignominies that were heaped upon him, not with an air of sullen resignation, but with looks expressive of gratitude and pleasure. He had borne, with unabashed countenance, the ill-concealed contempt of those around him, the open execrations of the wretched people whom he had outraged and betrayed.[51] *His own troops would return home laden with*

[49] Adrianus (Amplîss. Col., tom. iv. p. 1343), who, with his usual scrupulousness, mentions this dialogue as matter of hearsay. He might have sworn to its truth.

[50] "N'avoit en son cueur aultre desir que s'en retourner en sa royaulme." Commines, tom. i. p. 196; and see p. 198.

[51] "Multas contumelias a civibus passus, qui . . . in eum miras exprobrationes perfidiæ, proditionis, perjurii

the spoils of Liége.[52] Even his reputation for superior cunning seemed to have received a fatal wound. His subjects would receive him with derision, or with ironical pity still harder to endure. To the whole world he had become an object of scorn. Shorn of power, covered with infamy—yes, he might now be suffered to depart!

Finding that he need not fear to meet with a repulse, he addressed himself to Charles in person. He bade the duke, if he had any further occasion for his services, not to spare him. Otherwise he desired to return to Paris, where he would make proclamation of the treaty, and cause it to be registered by the Parliament—until which it could be of no effect. Charles consented,—not without some "murmuring" in an undertone,—but desired that the treaty should again be read over: if the king repented of having signed it, it should even now be annulled. Shame at his own perfidy seemed to be aroused by the astonishing equanimity with which it had been borne, and he stammered forth some faint apology for having forced his sovereign into such a position.[53]

Louis quitted Liége on the 2nd of November. Crèvecœur, with his lances, had orders to escort him to the frontier. The duke rode with him in person a short distance from the town, their cordiality undiminished to the last. The king was so well pleased with the entertainment he had met with that he declared his purpose to visit Charles again, in the ensuing summer, in Burgundy, "when they would spend a month together, making good cheer." At the moment when

atque infamiæ . . . acclamabant et joculabant." Basin, tom. ii. p. 205.

[52] Idem, ubi supra.

[53] "Feit quelque peu d'excuse de l'avoir amené là." Commines, tom. i. p. 198.

they were about to separate, Louis bethought him of a question which it were well to have solved by his fair cousin. "What shall be done," he inquired, "if by any chance my brother should refuse to accept of the settlement which, from my love to you, I have promised to bestow upon him?" "Do what shall content him," was the reply (at that last moment no other could well be made): "I leave the matter to be arranged between you."[54] So they parted. It need scarcely be said that they never met again. When Louis reached the confines of his own dominions he dismounted and pressed his lips to the soil, giving devout thanks to Heaven for his preservation in so great a peril.[55]

A week longer the army remained at Liége, securing its plunder, disposing of the prisoners that were daily captured in the neighbourhood and brought in to receive their doom, and otherwise preparing for the "end" that was to "crown the work" of havoc and devastation.[56] Several thousand labourers had been summoned from Luxembourg, and placed under the

[54] "Ledict duc luy respondit soubdainement, *sans y penser*: 'S'il ne le veult prendre, mais que vous faciez qu'il soit content, je m'en rapporte à vous deux.'" Commines, tom. i. p. 200.

[55] "Do er an sin Gewarsame kam, stand er ab und kusst den Herd, und lobt Gott gar löblich, das er ihm und den Sinen us so grosser Not hat geholfen." (Diesbach, in Der Schweizerische Geschichtforscher, B. viii. s. 174.) He also thanked his followers for their faithful service during this trying time, and especially commended little Diesbach and his brother pages.

[56] Anthoine de Loisey, a licentiate of law, writing from Liége to the president of Burgundy, says, "In the way of justice there is nothing going on except that every day they hang and drown such of the *Liégois* as are found or have been taken prisoners and have no money to ransom themselves. The city is well plundered (*bien butinée*), for nothing remains in it but rubbish (*riens que apres feux*); and, for example, I have not been able to find a sheet of paper proper for writing to you, but, with all my pains, could get nothing but some leaves from an old book." Lenglet, tom. iii. p. 83.—"Furent noyez en grant nombre les povres gens prisonniers." Commines, tom. i. p. 201.

orders of a Burgundian officer, who was instructed to commence operations as soon as the army had withdrawn from the place. With the exception of the churches and monasteries, and about three hundred houses to be occupied hereafter solely by ecclesiastics, the whole city was to be destroyed by fire and the ruins levelled with the ground. Having completed his arrangements, the duke took his departure on the morning of the 9th. Determined that the object of so many expeditions should now be thoroughly accomplished, he prepared, before returning to his own dominions, to lead his forces into Franchimont and other parts of the Ardennes, and waste with fire and sword those breeding-places of mischief and sedition.[57] Descending the Meuse on the left bank, he halted for the night at the Abbey of Vivigniers, about four leagues from the city. It was Saint Hubert's day, always celebrated at Liége as the supposed anniversary of its foundation, but henceforth to be associated with its destruction. Looking back, the soldiers beheld the flames already rising at different points, illuminating the numerous spires and casting a crimson glare upon the river, while the roar and tumult, transmitted along the surface of the water, were even at this distance distinctly audible.[58]

Crossing the river at Maestricht, where he ordered the decapitation of the former burgomaster of Liége, Charles pursued his march in a southerly direction, and entered a mountainous tract of country covered with dense forests, now bare of foliage, and traversed

[57] "Désiroit bien de *nettoyer ce trou.*" Haynin, tom. i. p. 143.

[58] "Nous oyons le bruict, comme si nous eussions esté sur le lieu. Je ne scay, ou si le vent y servoit, ou se c'estoit à cause que nous estions logiez sur la riviere." Commines, tom. i. p. 202.—The flames were visible from the towers of Aix-la-Chapelle, between thirty and forty miles distant. Bovy, tom. i. p. 32.—De Ram, p. 228, note.

by many rivulets and wild cascades, which the keen breath of winter had already arrested in their flow. Sheltered only by the leafless woods, the troops suffered severely. Hands and feet were frostbitten; provisions were scant; and the frozen wine was served out in solid pieces cut with hatchets from the casks. But neither the intensity of the cold nor the difficulties of the route interfered with the accomplishment of their ruthless purpose. The small towns and hamlets scattered through this romantic region, and inhabited by miners, stone-cutters, and workers in iron and other metals,—the lonely cabins of the woodmen and charcoal-burners, where perchance the wandering exiles of Liége had sometimes gained a refuge from the storm,—were devastated and burned. Mills, forges, all machines and implements of labour, were everywhere destroyed. The population—men and women, old and young—were put to the sword, or, flying before the invader, perished in the woods from exposure and fatigue. Commines, who observed a mother and her new-born infant lying lifeless and frozen by the wayside, mentions it merely as an evidence of the severity of the weather, and refrains from particularizing other "strange sights" which he saw, lest his narrative should be considered prolix.[59]

Having traversed all this portion of the principality from east to west, the duke again turned his face northwards, his progress hastened by the difficulty of procuring supplies. At Huy, where he remained from the

[59] "J'y veiz choses increables du froit. Il y eut ung gentilhomme qui perdit ung pied, . . . ung paige à qui il tomba deux doigtz de la main. Je veiz une femme morte et son enfant, dont elle estoit accouchée de nouveau. . . . J'en diroye assez d'estranges choses longues à escripre." Commines, tom. i. p. 203.—See also Haynin, tom. i. p. 143.—Theodoricus Paulus, De Ram, p. 228.—Bovy, tom. ii. pp. 63, 68.

19th to the 26th of November, he ordered the execution of a number of prisoners that had been sent thither for safe keeping; and, hearing that some fugitives had received shelter at Mezières, within the territory of France, he sent a peremptory summons for their surrender, which was prudently complied with by the authorities of the town. At Louvain he gave fresh examples of his severity; and, after his arrival at Brussels, he caused "Wencelin le Streel, a gentleman of Liége," and one of the leaders in the late revolt, to be publicly beheaded in that capital.[60] In his absence, the spirit which he had evoked continued to work. Throughout the winter, small parties of famished, shivering wretches, driven by a terrible necessity to solicit food and shelter from their enemies, made their appearance at Maestricht, Louvain, and other places, and received for mercy that swift death which put an end to their miseries and their wants.

Meanwhile the duke's instructions in regard to Liége had been duly carried into effect. The work of destruction had proceeded slowly and systematically—precautions being taken, though not in all instances effectually, for the isolation of the churches and of the other edifices which it was intended to preserve. Every morning the flames were kindled at a fresh point, and more than seven weeks elapsed before they were finally suffered to expire. The ruins, as at Dinant, were searched, sifted, and levelled. Every thing portable and of value was carried off. Not a single building which had been used or inhabited solely by laymen was left standing. The steeples and towers which had symbolized the faith and aspirations of successive generations now rose amid the waste as monuments of the

[60] Haynin, tom. i. p. 144.

havoc which they alone had been permitted to survive.[61]

Yet the *foundations* of Liége, the original elements of its existence, still remained. The relics of Saint Lambert, defying a sacrilegious purpose to remove them, continued to occupy their venerable and majestic shrine.[62] Beneath the devastated soil lay sources of wealth which were indestructible and inexhaustible. The river, exempt from ravage or decay, flowed with the same full and even current as when, nine centuries before, Saint Monulph, looking down upon the triple valley where the Ourthe and the Vesdre discharge into the Meuse, had foretold the rise of a great and populous town. The Past had perished: its legacies had been squandered or destroyed. But there must still be a Future for Liége, based, like the Past, on what was imperishable and inalienable.

To trace even the dawn of that future forms, however, no portion of our task. While Charles of Burgundy survived Liége remained unpeopled and in ashes. A remnant of the former population found shelter in the caves along the hill-sides. A few wooden huts were built for the better accommodation of the priests, and of a certain number of mechanics whom they were permitted to retain in their service. Even these concessions were obtained only on stringent conditions and after a long negotiation. Tolls were levied on the vessels passing and repassing what had long

[61] Adrianus.—De Los.—De Merica.—Theodoricus Paulus.

[62] The party sent on this profane errand, supposed to be indicative of the duke's intention to transfer the episcopal seat to Maestricht, had no sooner laid hands on the object of their unhallowed quest than they were smitten with a panic and "confusion of mind," and fled precipitately from the spot;—"Quo audito dux miraculo sententiam de transferendis ecclesiis in melius commutavit." De Los, p. 62.

been the principal mart for the products with which they were freighted; and a fortress, constructed in a quarter of the city called "the Island," which had been ceded to the duke in gratitude for his services in suppressing the rebellion, commanded both banks of the Meuse, and forbade any attempt to revive the industry and trade so ruthlessly trampled upon and effaced.[63]

The war waged by Liége against the house of Burgundy was neither wisely undertaken nor heroically carried on. It was a natural, but fitful and frantic struggle to throw off a grasp too powerful to be thus escaped from, tightened at every fresh attempt, never loosened until life had become extinct.

It would have fared better with Liége if no bar had existed to its incorporation with the Burgundian dominions. In that case, the resistance would probably have ended after the success of the first invasion: for the change of rule would have been found beneficial; the popular liberties, as in other Belgian provinces, would have survived the conquest; and great advantages in respect of commerce would have flowed from it. We are fain to acknowledge, also, that, where there was no public opinion to impose a restraint upon the ambition of princes, the independence of a state possessing no better security for its maintenance than the forbearance of more powerful neighbours could be esteemed of little value. At an earlier period of history, the subdivision of Europe into small political communities had saved society from relapsing into utter barbarism. The flame of national life had been too feeble to animate the vast empire of Charlemagne, or even the kingdoms formed out of its principal parts.

[63] De Los, p. 62.—Documents in De Ram, p. 576, et seq.

The bonds that knit society together required to be tested and strengthened before being extended. But the time had at length arrived when the principle of cohesion was to become more active. Greater lights were about to rise, and the stars were fading in the gradual dawn. The extinction of petty sovereignties, the transformation of states into provinces, the consolidation of provinces into monarchies, are well-known phenomena that preceded or accompanied the general awakening of the human intellect in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; and, however violently these changes were effected, or with whatever incidental disasters to freedom and humanity, they were necessary stages in the development of nations and in the progress of civilization.

But reflections of this kind are derived from a wider view than that which our narrative has yet embraced. In reading a story like this of the ruin of Liége, we are not inclined to speculate about hidden causes or ultimate results. Every other consideration, every other sentiment, is overpowered by compassion for the miseries endured and abhorrence of the cruelty that inflicted them.

It is true that such barbarities were not uncommon in mediæval warfare, and that, in passing judgment on the transactions of a past age, we are not to overlook the point of view from which they were regarded by contemporaries. In the present instance, the chroniclers and other writers of the time seem to have considered the whole proceeding as amply justified by the circumstances—as the fit conclusion, the necessary sequel, of a series of events for which the Burgundian sovereign was in no degree responsible. The arrogance and presumption of a rebellious people, its long career

of anarchy and impiety, its continual relapses after each fresh chastisement and promise of amendment, were urged not merely as an apology for the final vengeance, but as evidence that Heaven had been the arbiter of that vengeance, man only the instrument.[64]

It was an act, therefore, sanctioned by the practice, instigated and excused by the crude ideas, the narrow prejudices, the blunted sensibilities of the age. But if the age stamps its character upon the man, it is also true that the man stamps his own character upon the age. In no state of society are the instincts of humanity altogether dormant, the voice of conscience wholly silent, the conflict between good and evil entirely suspended. What part each man has taken in that conflict, what share he has had in hastening or retarding the certain triumph of right over wrong, not what influences he has undergone, but what influence he has exercised, are the questions of chief importance in regard to him.

We cannot wonder that the destroyer of Dinant and of Liége should have been visited by presentiments of his brief career and violent end. It was written of old, "The man of blood shall not live out half his days." "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

[64] This sentiment is the key-note of the popular ballads and other productions in verse which commemorate the misfortunes of Liége. Specimens may be found in De Ram and other collections. But the same tone runs through all the accounts, extending even to that of Commines. Even in the present century, however, it is more common to discern the action of a controlling Providence in the evil which is permitted than in the beneficent laws that silently rectify or abolish it.

END OF VOL. I.

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